

NEW YORK (AP) — George Burns, the 98-year-old comedian, has celebrated his annual birthday party in a private home in New York City. Burns, who has been married to his wife, Mary, for 50 years, celebrated his birthday with a small gathering of friends and family. He is known for his long career in comedy, including his work with Bud Abbott and his own solo act. Burns has appeared in several films and on television, and he continues to be active in the entertainment industry.

Study: women  
with AIDS die  
sooner than men

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new study shows that women with AIDS die sooner than men. The study, conducted by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, found that women with AIDS have a shorter life expectancy than men with the same condition. The researchers believe this may be due to differences in how the disease progresses in men and women, as well as to differences in access to medical care. The study is one of the first to show that women with AIDS have a worse prognosis than men.

## Palestinians train for W. Bank service

JERICO (R) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), preparing for a future expansion of self-rule in the West Bank, on Friday graduated 235 new recruits to its main internal security force at a ceremony in the enclave of Jericho. The new members of the security force were recruited from throughout the West Bank, including areas still under Israeli occupation. Israeli officials, the graduates performed commando skills — running, jumping, and shooting through hoops of fire — they learned during three months of training in front of some 3,000 people at the municipal playground in Jericho. Speaking on behalf of PNA Chairman Yasser Arafat, Saeb Erekat, a PNA member, stressed the need for Israeli redeployment outside Palestinian cities and towns in the West Bank ahead of general elections which he said should be the basis for self-rule. An instructor told Reuters the trainees were all former Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) soldiers who had fought Israeli soldiers during the eight-year-old uprising against Israeli rule.



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## Algerian group declares war

PARIS (AFP) — An Algerian armed fundamentalist group on Friday declared open war on France, warning of action "in coming days, in the wake of the bloody end to last weekend's Air France Airbus hijack. The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) said that "war against France has become a legal duty" under Islamic Sharia law, because the French government had been shown to be in "collaboration" with the Algerian regime. "The Algerian nation is today directly in conflict with France and all those who support it, including the Jews and Christians of the world," it said in the latest edition of its newsletter, *Al Feth Al Moumine* (crushing victory). "The AIS groups are capable of hitting France on its own territory and the coming days will show, with God's help, their capacity to strike the unbeliever in his own home," it said. The AIS said the Airbus hijack, which ended Monday when French shock troops stormed the airliner and killed the four fundamentalist hostage-takers, "offers clear evidence of collaboration" between France and Algeria. (see page 12)

## CSCE turns OSCE

VIENNA (AFP) — The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on Sunday becomes the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The name change — 20 years after the creation of the CSCE in Helsinki when the cold war was at its height in 1975 — was decided during the conference's summit in Budapest in early December. The symbolic change will mark what the summit agreed was a wish to "express their determination to give a new political impetus" to the organisation, "to enable it to play a major role in the challenges of the 21st century." Based in Vienna, the 35-state organisation comprises NATO countries, former Warsaw Pact countries — Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and several former Soviet Republics — and neutral and non-aligned states. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) has been suspended from membership since 1992.

## Hall says that 'copter was shot down

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Newly freed U.S. airman Bobby Hall believes that his helicopter was shot over North Korea, a high-ranking Pentagon official said Friday. "The helicopter was apparently shot down," the official said, adding that Mr. Hall was questioned on the incident as he was flown back to his Florida home Friday. The chief warrant officer was released early Friday at the border between North and South Korea after 13 days of detention in Pyongyang (see inside). The North Koreans said they shot down the helicopter as it was involved in a spying mission. The United States said it strayed over the demilitarised zone due to a navigational error. "Mr. Hall did not know where he was," the Pentagon official said. He said that Mr. Hall described the helicopter as bursting into flames and that although he had no hard proof that gunfire was the cause, he saw no other possibility.

## Policeman wounded in southern Egypt

MINYA, Egypt (AFP) — Two militants shot and wounded a policeman in the head Friday as police tried to arrest them in a sugar cane field where they were hiding in the Minya region of southern Egypt, police said. The two fled after opening fire on police in the village of Nowai, near Mallawi, 300 kilometres (180 miles) south of Cairo. Police were carrying out a search after suspected militants killed four policemen in separate attacks in the Mallawi region Thursday.

## Israeli troops clash with settlement protesters

AL KHADER, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli troops clashed with hundreds of Palestinian and Jewish peace activists protesting on Friday at a new West Bank Jewish settlement site, which has threatened Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) talks, witnesses said. Ahmad Tibi, an adviser to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, said Israeli troops beat him with the butts of their guns. "We have been attacked by rifles, by pushing, we have been hit, women and children, by the Israeli soldiers," Dr. Tibi said. "I am shocked by the brutal behaviour of the Israeli soldiers, especially some of the police officers." The clashes deepened a quandary for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, keen to keep sluggish self-rule talks from derailing. Mr. Arafat's Palestinian Authority has said the renewed settlement activity could undermine the peace deal Israel and the PLO signed in September 1993. In Friday's protests seven people were wounded when 2,000 demonstrators clashed with the Israeli army. Five demonstrators were slightly wounded in scuffles

when they tried to break into the construction site at Ephrata where giant bulldozers have been working day and night to flatten stony ground ahead of the construction of 500 new settler homes. Army officials said two soldiers had been wounded and a curfew clamped on the nearby Palestinian village of El Khader, five kilometres south of Bethlehem. The fighting erupted after Friday prayers when dozens of left-wing Israelis joined hundreds of Palestinians who had gathered at the settlement despite a military ban on any demonstrations. The Israeli supreme court was due to rule Friday on an appeal against the ban, lodged by the Israeli "Peace Now" movement. Military officials said a ban was imposed to prevent settlers clashing with the Palestinian and Israeli protesters, as well as to stop any attacks by the hardline Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. The supreme court on Thursday rejected a Palestinian plea to suspend the construction work at Ephrata. Last year the settlement, which has 5,000 inhabitants, was given permission to build the new neighbourhood on 40

hectares of land. Palestinians say they hold the deeds to the land proving ownership before the creation of the Jewish state in 1948, and maintain the development is an entirely new settlement and not just an extension of Ephrata. Prime Minister Rabin has instructed the government's legal adviser, Michael Ben Yair, to present a report on the legality of the operation at the next cabinet meeting on Monday. And the government is due to discuss a suspension of the work on Monday. Mr. Arafat has urged Israel to halt such settler activities amid Palestinian warnings that the expansion work could undermine negotiations on extending the rule on the West Bank. Jewish settlers used bulldozers to destroy the foundations of a petrol station being built by a Palestinian businessman near the Mehola settlement in the West Bank, military officials said (see page 12). Demonstrators at the settlement site also threw stones at border police troops, knocking one unconscious and cutting another in the forehead. (Continued on page 12)

## Syria hails mini-summit; Israel sees a 'mere' hitch

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria on Friday hailed the results of an Arab mini-summit after winning the backing of Egypt and Saudi Arabia for its stand in the peace process. Syrian official newspapers voiced satisfaction with the Alexandria summit which ended Thursday, saying it had "rekindled hopes of overcoming the Arabs' worsened situation." The government daily *Tishrin* said the summit "rose to the challenge of remedying the Arab imbalance, for the battle for peace is fiercer than war." Al Baath, the mouthpiece of the ruling Baath Party, said the summit had "put the seal on joint Arab action and coordination, which could replace Israel's misleading proposals." And the daily *Al Thawra* praised the two-day meeting as "extraordinary and a turning point in joint Arab action."

A statement after the meeting between Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd backed Syria's demands in peace negotiations and called for a total Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands. Israel dismissed the Arab mini-summit as a minor hitch. Israeli officials here said the summit would not obstruct the peace process. A senior official here said it was in Israel's interests that Syria's position was strengthened in the peace talks.

The worst thing for us would be to see Syria isolated in the Arab World," he said, asking not to be named. The three leaders demanded that Israel withdraw from "all of the Golan plateau, as far as the Golan Heights drawn up in 1949 and all occupied Palestinian lands including Arab Jerusalem." Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Thursday acknowledged the summit could slow Israeli efforts to forge links with Arab states. "It is a mere hitch. We believe this summit is part of building a new Middle East," he told military radio. He added that it was "the peace process and not Israel which is the root cause of the shape of the Arab World." Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin described the Alexandria meeting as a "pathetic" effort to halt the tide of change in the region. The Israeli press stressed Friday that the summit's final statement had not demanded that Gulf Arab states freeze contacts with Israel. (Continued on page 12)



A wounded Israeli paratrooper is given first aid after he passed out during scuffles with demonstrators in the Arab village of El Khader (AFP photo)

## Russians bog down around Grozny

KARPINSKI HILL (Agencies) — Russian forces kept up artillery and air strikes around Grozny Friday, but the failure of Moscow's ground troops to dislodge Chechen fighters from this strategic hill highlights the danger of the war against Chechnya's independence bogging down. Heavy machinegun fire, tank and artillery shelling clattered around Karpinski Hill, west of the Chechen capital Grozny and Russian warplanes could be seen in the sky for hours running on the Chechen defenders in the Kankala suburbs. Early Friday Chechens said Russian bombers hit a major oil refinery near here for the second time in two days, sending up a thick pall of smoke which could deprive Grozny residents of their main source of fresh water, namely snow. Russia denied that its forces bombed the refinery. The people collect the snow and boil it to use for water, but the explosion Friday has deposited a film of oil on the snow making it unfit for consumption. The Chechen interior ministry appealed to Russia early Friday to cease the air raid which it said could provoke "an ecological disaster" in the Caucasus, Interfax news agency said. The Chechen presidency, cited by Interfax, said nearly 5,000 tonnes of ammonia were stored near the refinery. "At any moment, the blaze may spread and cause a major ecological disaster over the entire Caucasus," a ministry spokesman said. A Moscow radio station said on Friday that Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev had appealed to President Boris Yeltsin for a new year ceasefire, but the Russian government said it knew nothing about it.

Despite the destruction wreaked on Grozny by repeated air raids, almost three weeks since being ordered to restore Moscow's rule in the Muslim separatist republic, which declared independence in 1991, the Russian forces appear to be in a strategic rut. Less than 50 Chechens at any one time are able to hold the summit of Karpinski Hill, which has a commanding view of Grozny, despite having only three artillery pieces, an armoured car carrying an anti-aircraft gun, a heavy machinegun, and small arms. From their soaring vantage point, Chechen soldiers pointed out what they said were 300 Russian armoured vehicles and helicopters, three kilometres away. Chechens said the Russians were unwilling to make a frontal assault on the steep hill and that even daylight air bombing and helicopter rocket attacks were not enough to take the position. The snow-covered summit

is pocked with black shell and rocket craters and artillery commander Heizar Hotchkaya admitted that Thursday's incessant bombing was a "nightmare." "Boom, boom, boom everywhere, fire everywhere," he said. But because there are so few Chechens, the chances of a direct hit are slim and only one man was injured the whole day, Mr. Heizar said. "When we hear the planes we just dive into the snow, or trenches," said one soldier. A Russian artillery shell suddenly whistled over the ridge, sending every soldier plunging into the thick snow, before exploding harmlessly in the woods. The Chechen position was spartan, but well organised. Each of the three visible guns was well dug in, the armoured car was painted white and hidden in the trees and even troops who had just spent three "hot" nights said they were far better motivated than their enemy.

"Their planes can't hit our big guns because they are scared of everything. We're not, we're fighting for our land. They just strike and run," said Visayit Ibayev, one of the Chechen commanders. During ground attacks the Russians "first send up the conscripts and then the Spetsnaz (commandos)," said Shakhman Akhalyetov, a 33-year-old former history teacher, who carried a grenade in his breast pocket. "The airpower is used to protect the Spetsnaz, so they often hit their own men." President Yeltsin sent his best wishes to thousands of Russian troops facing a miserable new year in Chechnya, ITAR-TASS news agency said. "I send you my special New Year greetings, as I know how important it is to know that you are remembered... when you are far away from home, carrying



Chechens queue for water in a neighbourhood of Grozny. Water supplies of the capital of the break-away republic of Chechnya were cut as a result of the heavy bombardment by Russian airplanes on the city during the last week (AFP photo)

## Arab Bank, Shatin Group announce compromise deal

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Arab Bank and the Shatin Group of companies, one of the biggest in Jordan, have announced that they have reached an out-of-court settlement to a controversial multi-million dinar dispute. Announcing the "brotherly and cordial" settlement to the press on Thursday, Arab Bank Chairman Abdul Majeed Shoman and Shatin Group head Mohammad Shatin did not provide details of the deal, which, according to sources, involved around JD 35 million in credit facilities that the Arab Bank extended to the Shatin group. "We have reached a final and complete settlement of the dispute and the entire episode is behind us," said Mr. Shoman, adding that the bank had withdrawn

four cases it had filed against the Shatin group. Mr. Shoman and Mr. Shatin, who were sitting next to each other at a press conference, agreed that the Arab Bank's links with the group dated back to more than 40 years and there was no cause of confidence between them. He recalled an instance when the Arab Bank honoured a cheque written by Mr. Shatin for the payment of a cement bag in payment of a real estate deal. "As far as we are concerned, the payment order was signed as cheque since it was issued by Mr. Shatin," Mr. Shoman told Reuters. The Shatin group is one of the major holding companies in Jordan. Its interests cover projects in agriculture and industry inside the kingdom as well as the West Bank. At one point, it was also reported

that the group was planning to launch Jordan's first private sector air freight company. Mr. Shoman, who reportedly was in direct charge of credit policies of the bank vis-a-vis major institutions inside and outside Jordan, said he was travelling outside the country when the dispute over the Shatin group broke surface and that he did not have an opportunity to end the dispute before it reached court. Mr. Shoman implicitly criticised the media for what he described as blowing the issue out of proportion. "Even the Arab Bank were to lose JD 10 million or JD 30 million in the affair, the bank would not have undermined the bank, which makes an annual profit of JD 130 million," he said. "Nor would it have any repercussions on the national economy, and I



interest in the issue. Adding fuel to the media fire was the resignation of three prominent lawyers, Ibrahim Bakr, Faris Nabulsi and Tareq Nabil, in protest against what they saw as an unprecedented soft-line approach by the management over the "dispute" with the group. Mr. Nabil told the Jordan Times on Friday: "When there is a major difference in views between a lawyer and his client over the manner in which to handle a particular issue, then it is better for the lawyer to step aside." Mr. Nabil declined to elaborate and also refused to discuss the details of the affair. According to informed sources, the dispute involved JD 28 million in overdraft facilities given to the Shatin Group and JD 6.5 million in a personal loan granted to Mr. Shatin.

According to the sources and reports in the local press, the dispute developed after the bank's legal department, which had been headed by Mr. Bakr for many years, found that the collateral offered by the group to cover the loans was not enough under standard banking practices. The sources, who preferred anonymity, said the compromise deal appeared to involve the transfer of 51 per cent of a vegetable oil plant owned by the Shatin group to Arab Bank ownership. In addition, the rest of the ownership would be mortgaged with the Arab Bank. The first step in the compromise is an assessment of the market value of the plant, the sources said. "This arrangement would cover the bulk of the JD 28 million loan given to the Shatin Group, leaving about two or three million dinars," said one source.

"The personal loan granted to Mr. Shatin has not matured yet, but the accord also involves provisions to cover that amount as and when the loan matures." Other sources said several other leading businessmen had come forward to guarantee the Shatin Group's dues to the bank. The dues to the Arab Bank are only part of the credit facilities that the Shatin Group had secured from the local market. But, according to the sources, the collateral offered to other banks by the group are strong and are sufficient to cover the amounts, reportedly involving more than JD 10 million. In his comment Thursday's press conference, Mr. Shoman was confident the assets of the Shatin group were sufficient to cover three or four million to the Arab Bank.



Other Flights (Terminal 2)		06:30	Amsterdam (K.L.)
04:20	Vienna (OS)	07:00	London (B.E.)
04:30	Rome, Larnaca (AZ)	07:40	Athens (SA)
04:40	Dubai (EK)		
19:00	Sana'a (YV)		
19:05	Larnaca (CY)		
20:20	Beirut (ME)		
20:30	Paris, Damascus		
20:40	Cairo (MS)		
22:45	London (BA)		
23:40	Athens (OA)		
23:50	Amsterdam (KL)		

DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	
Flights	
(Terminal 1)	
06:25	Beirut (RJ)
07:05	Aqaba (RJ)
11:35	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:50	London, Beirut (RJ)
11:50	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:00	London (RJ)
12:45	Cairo (RJ)
19:05	Bahrain, Dhaka (RJ)
20:00	Larnaca (RJ)
20:30	Jeddah (RJ)
20:40	Damascus (RJ)
21:25	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
07:45	Beirut (ME)
12:30	Vienna (OS)
19:15	Dubai (EK)
19:40	Sana'a (YV)
22:00	Larnaca (CY)
23:00	Cairo (MS)
23:50	Damascus, Paris (AF)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8.00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus	9.45 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus	11.00 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5.45 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES	
Upper lower price in fils per kg	
Apple	700-800
Banana	600
Banana (Mukhammar)	620
Cabbage	210-220
Carrot	200-180
Cauliflower	440-430
Celery	340-200
Cucumbers (large)	210-200
Cucumbers (small)	200-240
Eggplant	340-220
Grape	540-400
Grape Fruit	290-180
Lemon	290-180
Marrow (large)	200-180
Marrow (small)	400-300
Onion (green)	170-200
Onion (dry)	400-300
Orange	400-300
Pepper (hot)	400-300
Pepper (sweet)	400-300
Potato	100-200
Radish	280-150
Squash	320-200
Sweet Beans	300-200
Tomato	200-240



## Regent condoles Shreideh family

**DEIR ABI SAIED (Petra)** — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Thursday visited the Shreideh family at Deir Abi Saeed near Irbid and conveyed to them condolences from His Majesty King Hussein over the death of Captain Bilal Abdul Majid Shreideh who died in a plane crash at Marka Airport Wednesday.

His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein attended the funeral of Capt. Shreideh who was a Royal Falcons pilot.

The 29-year-old pilot was on take-off from Marka Airport at about 1:00 p.m. Wednesday when his single-seat Extra 300 dove to the ground. Capt. Shreideh, who leaves a wife and infant daughter, was laid to rest in his hometown of Deir Abi Saeed.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad delegated the director of the Irbid Police Department to convey his condolences to the Shreideh family.



Malaysian students of AL at Bayt University Thursday recite Islamic songs during a ceremony marking Al Isra Wal Miraj (Petra photo)

## Malaysian students take part in marking Islamic holiday

**AMMAN (J.T.)** — As part of Jordan's observance of Al Isra Wal Miraj, Malaysian students of Al at Bayt University recited Islamic songs in a ceremony held at the university Thursday.

At the ceremony, which was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, university President Mohammad Adnan Al Bakht said the Israel (Prophet Mohammad's nocturnal journey from Al Masjid Al Haram in Medina Munawarah in Saudi Arabia to Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem), represents the first spiritual conquest of Jerusalem and the first eternal relationship between Al at Bayt (the Hashemites) and Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

Also addressing the ceremony were President of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (Al at Bayt Foundation) Naseruddin Al Assad, Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Nooh Salim and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, who all highlighted the importance of this occasion and stressed the eternal relation between Jerusalem and Al at Bayt.

Following the ceremony, Prince Hassan and the audience attended noon prayers at Bilal Ben Rabah Mosque at the university.

The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, advisors to His Majesty King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Cabinet ministers and senior civil and military officials.

In Amman, His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein deputised for the King, who is in Austria receiving treatment for an ear infection, and attended a major ceremony held at King Abdullah Mosque in Abdali.

Addressing the ceremony, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi reviewed the great meanings and implications of this occasion, particularly at this time, when our nation is facing many challenges, he said.

Also addressing the congregation was member of the Upper House of Parliament Kamel Al Sharif, who said that Al Isra Wal Miraj is one of the great occasions. It is a great spiritual experience which has significant meaning and implications, he said. The occasion stresses the status of Jerusalem and its importance to the Muslim Umma.

He praised the role played by the Hashemites in safeguarding the holy places in Jerusalem.

## Jordan hopes for economic prosperity in '95

### Officials caution against immediate expectations urging more debt reduction, private sector initiative

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

**AMMAN** — Jordan enters 1995 with hopes high that its new found peace with Israel would bring in increased economic dividends but with strong caution that the fruits of peace could not be reflected in the lives of people overnight.

Complaints are loud that Jordanians failed to see any significant improvement in their standard of living and that prices rose dramatically during the year.

Officials argue that the expectations were too high and unrealistic in terms of quick changes in living standards.

The rise in market prices, they say, is the result of one-time economic adjustments to improve the image of Jordan and make its policies internationally compatible at a time when the Kingdom needs to project itself as a haven for foreign investments.

Jordan, which began 1994 with over \$6.8 billion in foreign debts, enters the new year with \$830 million of the debts being written off and nearly \$3 billion rescheduled.

For all technical purposes, the Kingdom does not have any major debt servicing obligations in 1995-1997, but that is not simply enough to attract the foreign investments it badly needs to address the problems of unemployment and poverty.

Essentially, it would mean reducing the foreign debts by at least half, an objective that the government has set its eyes on in 1995. Most of the creditors of the Kingdom — not to mention the U.S., the United Kingdom and Germany which have already extended write-offs — have responded positively, at least verbally, to its call for debt relief, but concrete steps have yet to materialise.

Amman is also hopeful that its request for economic and military assistance (\$2.5 billion per year for the next 10 years) from the U.S. along the lines Washington extended to Egypt and Israel after their 1978 Camp David agreements, would meet with success in 1995.

But no-one is able to foresee with any degree of accuracy the level of American assistance to Jordan. "It all depends on how the U.S. Congress views the need to support and maintain the state of peace between Jordan and Israel and how far Washington lawmakers are convinced of the Jordanian argument that improvement in the standard of living of its people is vital for peace to hold and sustain itself," said a senior official.

Nothing was definite for Jordan when it entered 1994. It watched with apprehension

the course of the Palestinian-Israeli autonomy deal while the Jordanian-Israeli track remained largely neglected with little sign that Israelis were serious in engaging the Kingdom in substantial negotiations.

The common agenda that Jordan and Israel signed on Sept. 14, 1993, one day after the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel formalised their autonomy deal, remained nothing more than a document, although the option was available to Jordan to accept some of the terms set by Israel and sign a peace treaty.

### Focus on foreign investment

After signing the peace treaty on Oct. 26, 1994, under which it secured its territorial water rights and addressed its security concerns, Jordan focussed on making itself an attractive target for foreign and local investment.

One week after signing the peace accord, Jordan went to the Casablanca economic conference on the Middle East and North Africa with proposals for projects worth \$15 billion.

Most of the projects presented at the Oct. 30-Nov. 1 conference were of a regional nature, involving benefits for all in the immediate region. Others were more national and related to infrastructure within the country with options open for foreign investment.

Casablanca put Jordan on the economic map of the Middle East and defined its priorities. Officials who represented Jordan at the conference say that the very objective of the exercise — to bring a fresh limelight on the Kingdom and the opportunities available here — was achieved, and that Jordan did not expect announcements of billions of dollars of foreign investment in the country at the meeting.

The Kingdom is now preparing for a follow-up conference to be held in Amman in the second half of 1995 with hopes that by that time ideas and proposals made in Casablanca would have been discussed in depth, and foreign investors would be more interested in bringing capital to the country.

But, Jordanian economic strategists agree, political stability resulting from the peace treaty and the democratisation process launched in 1989 are simply not enough to attract foreign investors particularly that the international competition for foreign capital is becoming stiff and fierce.

### Cutting bureaucracy, raising incentives

Spurred by this awareness,

the government has moved steadily towards cutting down on bureaucracy and increasing incentives for foreign capital by amending legislation. A draft law on investment promotion prepared by the Royal Commission for Reform and Modernisation has been submitted to the government, incorporating added incentives to an amended draft legislation on companies and foreign investment.

The most concrete among the Jordanian moves in this context was the establishment of a "one-stop-window" for investors opened at the Investment Promotion Department.

Critics say, however, that the realisation that it is time for dramatic changes in Jordan's traditional approaches is limited to top-level thinking. They argue that the you-wait-while-I-take-a-nap mindset of medium- and junior-level bureaucrats has not changed much despite the efforts launched by the Royal Commission which is headed by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

Information Minister Jawad Anani, appeared to this state of affairs when he emphasised the need for Jordanians "to work hard" to reap the benefits of peace. In a television interview broadcast on Thursday, Dr. Anani cautioned that the fruits of peace would not come on their own to Jordan without the Kingdom working to reap them.

### Pinning hopes on the private sector

The Kingdom is pinning high hopes on the private sector to assume a leading role in investment projects. The 1993-1997 development plan prepared by the Ministry of Planning gives a lion's share to private sector investments in areas that include infrastructure.

Notwithstanding the unchanged belief of some businessmen that the state has to deliver projects to them on a silver platter, a recent gathering of regional businessmen held in Cairo under the auspices of the European Union (EU) showed that the Jordanian private sector was convinced that it had to take the initiative, participants say.

Jordanian businessmen who attended the Dec. 5-7 meeting in Cairo were "shocked in the positive sense" when they saw how their Israeli counterparts went about finalising deals with European counterparts without falling back on the government, said a participant.

"Sure enough, the shock was a catalyst in spurring

many of the businessmen to realise that they do not and should not depend on the government to lead them by the hand to projects," said the participant. "Of course, the government has to play a role, but the bulk of the work has to be undertaken by the private sector itself."

There is enough liquidity in the country for new investments, but commercial banks are unable to lend extra liquidity to new ventures if only because of a ceiling on credits imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The government says that it is trying to exempt credit facilities for industrial projects from the ceiling.

The government is also hopeful that the Palestine National Authority (PNA) would be more forthcoming in its perceptions of economic relations with Jordan in 1995 and would ratify an agreement the two sides drafted in 1994.

Tourism is an area that Jordan expected to see booming after the signing of the peace treaty. But, as it turned out, Israeli tourists visiting Jordan are spending little money in the Kingdom. The government is unable to do anything in this context. The Israeli government says that entry visa charges as well as admission fees to some of the tourist attractions in Jordan make up a good income for the Kingdom.

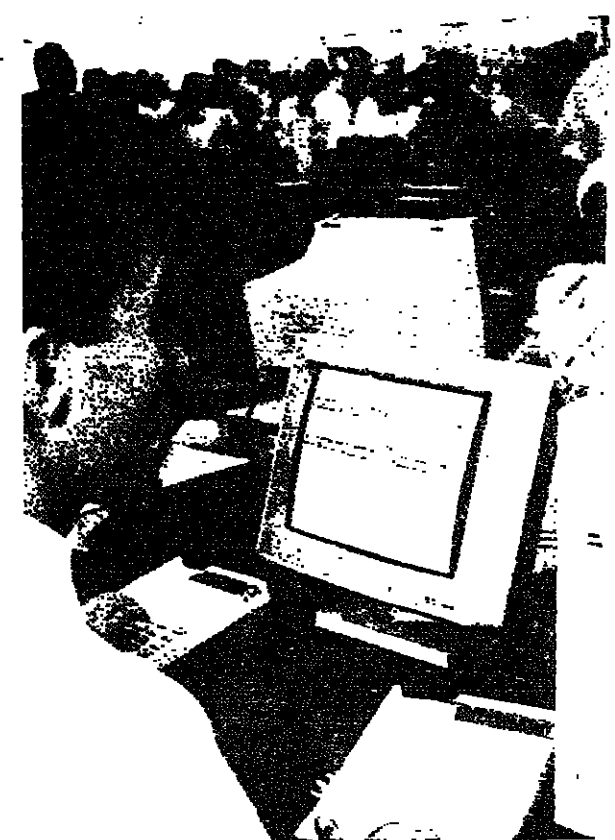
Annual economic growth is expected to be slightly less than six per cent, and inflation around four per cent during the year.

Exports are estimated to have risen to more than JD 2.5 billion during the year, registering a more than 10 per cent increase over 1993. Definite figures for imports are not yet available, but the final figure for the year is expected to be much higher than the JD 630 million registered during 1993.

### Economic measures adopted in 1994

Among the major economic measures adopted by the government in 1994 were:

- Introduction of seven to 20 per cent sales tax to replace a consumption tax. The move, which drew heavy criticism, was, however, seen as a major step in revamping the taxation structure of the country. Changes in the income tax structure are being studied.
- Exempting all income from exports from the income tax.
- Rescheduling of \$1.3 billion in foreign debts.
- Securing \$830 million in debt write-off (including \$702 million from the U.S. in three years, \$74 million from the United Kingdom and \$50 million from Germany).



An employee registers transactions at the Amman Financial Market

— Increasing the pension and salaries of civil servants and servicemen. Teachers were given special consideration.

— Reducing customs duties on vehicles. Further reductions are expected next year.

— Moving to restructure financially troubled Royal Jordanian, the national carrier, by increasing its capital.

— Announcing moves to privatise the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC). A concession to install and operate Jordan's first cellular phone system was given to a local company in affiliation with an American giant.

— Undertaking moves to salvage some of the troubled state-owned enterprises.

— Launching moves to correct the imbalances and inefficiencies in the energy and water sectors.

— Preparing a draft budget for 1995 worth JD 1.674 billion with a JD 50 million deficit. The budget was approved unchanged by Parliament in return for a government undertaking to implement most of a list of 67 recommended reforms.

The reforms, if implemented, according to their proponents, would go a long way in correcting many "shortcomings" in the economy and their repercussions on the low-income group.

The Amman Financial Market (AFM), the Jordanian bourse that is widely seen as the main barometer for investor confidence, fared badly during the year.

Uncertainties of the peace

process and economic conditions with the Palestine influenced and curbed growth of the market throughout the year. A further to investor scepticism was that capital gains "be subject to taxation changed legislation with less-than-anticipate flow of foreign capital into the market. Dozens of companies also raised their capital under controlled measures drawing capital away from the immediate trading.

In the first six months of the year, the foreign change reserves of the Kingdom plunged by over \$300 as a result of high demand for foreign and lower-than-expected expatriate remittances. Contrary to reports a gestions, the flow of currency to the West in exchange for dinars found to be insignificant.

The Central Bank (CBJ) said a month that it had managed to stabilise the reserves from the early-1993 \$600 million.

That indeed is a far from the zero reserve the CBJ had at the 1988, and a key indicator of the present monetary situation of the Kingdom, prompt any devaluation of the currency.

In fact, according to Governor Mohammed Nabulsi, the dinar is a higher exchange against most international currencies, but any valuation would reflect on the Kingdom's

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### FILMS

★ Triple features untitled "The Legend of Sleep Hollow," "Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day," and "The Wind in the Willows" at the American Centre on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

### BAZAR CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

★ "Ramadan Charity Bazaar" at Al Ahliya School for Girls, Jabal Amman, First Circle (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)

★ Bani Hamida Christmas Display with a variety of small gift items at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman, First Circle, Rainbow Street.

### EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Mahmoud Mousa at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.

★ Plastic art exhibition by Laila Kawash at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of works by Mahmud Obeidi at Darat Al Funun. Also showing an exhibition of portraits by Fahrelnissa Zeid and the exhibition of contemporary Arab artists.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Ismail and Tamam Shammout at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

★ Exhibition by artists Lattif Al Khateeb and Muhy Khateeb at the Housing Bank Gallery.

★ Exhibition at Mona Saudi's Studio, Abdoun Village — Tel.: 829700 until Dec. 31st, 1994.

## French pilot

(Continued from page 12)

although Interior Minister Charles Pasqua said on Tuesday he was "pretty sure" the gunmen's leader was named Abdullah Yahia.

Algeria has been in turmoil since the government called off a 1992 general election that the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win. About 20,000

people have been killed in the ensuing three years of civil strife.

An Algerian group warned Friday that it now had a "legal duty" to wage war on France in the wake of the bloody end to last week's Airbus hijack.

The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) said in a newsletter published Friday that "war against France has become a legal duty" under Islamic Sharia law.



Wissam Boustany



Amira Fouad

## Boustany, Fouad to ring in the New Year with a flute and piano recital

By Jean-Claude Elias  
Special to the Jordan Times

**AMMAN** — Flute master Wissam Boustany is back in Jordan for an evening recital, this time with pianist Amira Fouad.

Under the patronage of H.R.H. Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped, in cooperation with the British Council in Amman, and with special sponsorship by the Amman Marriott Hotel, has invited Mr. Boustany and Ms. Fouad to perform on Wednesday, Jan. 4 at the

Royal Cultural Centre (RCC).

Mr. Boustany's resume indicates that he performed in 1991 under the baton of the great Claudio Abbado. However, after a complete reading of the resume and the unanimous, superlative press critiques of the Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The Times and others, one is tempted to re-arrange the sentence to read "Claudio Abbado had the pleasure and the honour to conduct Wissam Boustany."

Mr. Boustany and Ms. Fouad will play works by Donizetti, Doppler, Chopin,

Franck as well as Boustany's own compositions. Both performers are of Arab origin — Mr. Boustany is from Lebanon and a British citizen now, and Ms. Fouad was born in Scotland to Egyptian parents.

They have both lived and studied in Great Britain.

Wissam Boustany does not consider it sufficient to play with unsurpassed virtuosity, taste and musicianship, thus joining great flutists such as Jean-Pierre Rampal of France and others, he is also concerned with bringing to his audiences contemporary works through attractive

programmes.

Amira Fouad studied in Canada, England and France. She was the winner of the "Young Artist Competition," and has played and recorded in solo recitals in Canada. Ms. Fouad, has also performed with the Cairo Symphony Orchestra.

The Canadian "Kingston Whing Standard," of Ontario, wrote about her: "...The freshness of youth... plus a brilliant technique..."

The new year could not start with musicians of higher standards than Mr. Boustany and Ms. Fouad.

## Trucks to be allowed back on old road to Aqaba

**AQABA (Petra)** — In response to truck drivers' protests about unsafe conditions of the ring road around the port city of Aqaba, Minister of Transport Samir Kaware announced that trucks can will now be allowed to use the old road to Aqaba at night.

The announcement was made following an inspection tour of the Aqaba region and the ring road by Mr. Kaware and the interior and public works minister.

Trucks drivers commuting between Aqaba and Amman last week staged a strike saying that "the death road" was responsible for the death of 21 of their colleagues this year.

In a statement, end of his tour in Aqaba, Mr. Kaware said trucks would be allowed on the old road into and out of the city between 8:00 and 7:00 a.m.

He also announced that the Ministry of Public Works will take measures to improve conditions on the kilometre ring road as soon as possible.

Mr. Kaware said that the Council Ministers will soon regulations order trucks to reduce per cent the 13 axial weight allowed under the previous regulations.

## OBITUARY

The Chechen and the North Caucasian community in Jordan mourn the death of American photographer/journalist,

**CYNTHIA ELBAUV**, a sister who shared the death and the family and the American people.

Tel/Fax 6-8315



# Korea frees U.S. pilot

MUNJOM, Korea (R) — North Korea Friday freed a U.S. helicopter pilot it had held for 13 days, allowing him to fly home to Florida for Year's Day and keeping his nuclear deal with the U.S. States.

Chief Warrant Officer Hall looked pale and tired and was wearing the flying suit he wore in his helicopter when it was shot down in North Korea on 17 as he crossed the heavily fortified Korean border to South Korea in the night.

Mr. Hall, 20, flew to a medical check-up, and then left the United States in the night.

President Bill Clinton expressed his relief at Officer Hall's release. He said he had met with Officer Hall in the White House, and that Officer Hall had said he was well. Brooksville, Florida.

Mr. Hall's family wept and hugged one another when they learned he was home.

It is a moment of great relief for the American family, said U.S. Deputy Secretary of State William H. Webster, who was in Pyongyang, and with him.

Hubbard said the nuclear deal was now on track. DPRK has up to now

faithfully implemented its part of the agreed framework and we believe that it is in our interest that we do the same and we are therefore pleased that we can now look to the future and implement the important project.

Under the accord reached in October, designed to eliminate North Korea's ability to produce nuclear arms, Washington is to arrange the supply to Pyongyang of new nuclear reactors costing \$4 billion and interim supplies of fuel oil.

The two countries also agreed to take steps towards establishing normal diplomatic relations.

Mr. Hubbard said he had "two rather difficult days" in Pyongyang working for Officer Hall's release, but he had cut no deals.

Pyongyang says it brought down the U.S. helicopter with one shot and Officer Hall's co-pilot David Hilemon, whose body was handed over last week, was killed in the crash.

It accused the Americans of espionage and issued what it described as Officer Hall's confession to "illegal intrusion." Washington says the helicopter strayed across the border accidentally.

Mr. Clinton also said the United States had given up nothing in the agreement that secured Officer Hall's release.

"Chief Warrant Officer Hall was held for too long after his helicopter strayed off course on a routine training mission. But we are very glad that he has been released and is now in freedom," he said.

Mr. Clinton rejected a suggestion that the deal meant Washington's ally, South Korea, would be cut out of future U.S. contacts with the North, which Seoul strongly resists.

"The terms of the agreement are clear from their own words. We were faithful to all of our commitments to our allies and to our commitments to our own policies," Mr. Clinton said.

Mr. Hubbard said the United States had not negotiated for Officer Hall's release, but only stated its case and expressed its "sincere regrets" for the "accidental intrusion."

Pyongyang Radio, monitored in Tokyo Friday said North Korea agreed to return Officer Hall because the United States had "accepted our demand."

"North Korea asked for, and the United States agreed to, further bilateral military contacts to prevent incidents which threaten peace and security on the Korean peninsula."

"The United States also agreed to our demand to give



Parliament Speaker Sheikh Russak Ali (left) holds resignation letter of the opposition Awami League. On the right is league chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed. The opposition said 147 MPs resigned, instead of

## Bangladesh political crisis lumbers on after Zia olive branch rejected

DHAKA (AFP) — A political crisis that has wracked Bangladesh since March 1990 has deepened as opposition MPs rejected an olive branch from the government on Thursday, and a legal controversy over the resignations.

Parliamentary Speaker Sheikh Russak Ali said he received the resignation letters from the MPs in three bundles, adding that he would have to look at each document individually since they were not presented to him in person.

Bangladesh's constitution requires MPs personally to hand in a letter of resignation to the speaker.

Source said Mr. Ali, who was already out of the capital, had sought legal advice on the controversy and would return here Saturday to give his ruling.

The sources also said some opposition MPs had contacted Mr. Ali after the mass resignation expressing a desire to keep their seats.

Of the 147 MPs, only the resignation of Salauddin Qader Chowdhury, from the National Democratic Party, was accepted as he personally gave notice to Mr. Ali.

Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed said Thursday that the MPs would

## Bardot quits Saint-Tropez

TOULON, France (AFP) — French actress and animal rights campaigner Brigitte Bardot said Thursday she is quitting Saint-Tropez, the French Riviera fishing village her presence transformed into a playground of the rich and famous. Bardot told a news conference that her Paris-based animal rights foundation now took up so much time that it was a handicap for her to be so far away.

Bardot said "Saint-Tropez is no longer Saint-Tropez for me," she said, adding, "Everything has changed too much." A victim of its own success, Saint-Tropez is now a magnet for backpackers and the budget end of the holiday market. Bardot walked out on Saint-Tropez last June amid a highly-publicized row with Mayor Jean-Michel Couve, vowing not to return until he left office, in protest at the council's decision to let one of its halls to a hunters' convention. Reports said Mr. Couve had finally managed to mollify her by seeking her advice on what to do about the pigeons that were becoming a pest in the town. She spent Christmas with her husband Bernard d'Ormal and friends at her villa at La Madrague on the outskirts of Saint-Tropez, and camped an "Animals' Christmas" at nearby Hyeres Thursday. She made a plea for homes for neglected animals and campaigned for low-cost sterilization of animals to stop the procreation of unwanted pets.

## Row erupts after no winners in Manila filmfest

MANILA (R) — Judges at an annual Philippine Film Festival have refused to hand out awards for best picture and director, saying none of the entries were good enough. Mano Hernandez, a film critic and one of the judges, told a television station Wednesday that all six films failed to make a mark.

"We wanted to send a message to the producers that the quality of the movies should be improved. They should not make films just for the sake of participating. This has been the weakest filmfest in terms of quality," he said.

Only the awards for best actor and actress were handed out to virtual unknowns. Philippine films, frequently made on the cheap, are typically comedy or action tales that glorify violence. The decision of the jurors Tuesday evening, which left movie producers and directors speechless, came a few months after a scandal rocked the intrigue-ridden Philippine industry. Actress Ruffa Gutierrez, powerful movie manager Lolit Solis and two other actors are on trial accused of plotting to rig awards for best actor and actress in another film festival in June. Gutierrez, Solis and another actor deny fraud charges over the alleged switch of envelopes containing the names of the winners.

Officials of an auditing company which counted the ballots of the judge on Tuesday night stood behind the presenters to make sure the right name was announced.

## Royal Navy offers sailors wine

LONDON (R) — Sailors in Britain's Royal Navy can now switch their daily drink ration from beer to wine. One of the reasons cited for the decision is the presence of 40,000 WRENS in the Navy. The move, announced in the navy newspaper, won immediate plaudits. One woman serving on the aircraft carrier Ark Royal said: "Most of the girls prefer wine. It's more feminine." In 1970, the navy dropped a 300-year-old tradition of giving sailors a daily tot of rum.

## Mother of 12 denied French big family medal

PARIS (R) — A French woman with 12 children accused the government of hard-heartedness for refusing her a gold medal awarded to mothers of big families. Solange Clarenne, 33, had five of her children before she married their father, disqualifying her from getting the medal automatically awarded to women with eight or more children born in wedlock. "I was a good mother... my children have no reason to reproach me. I've done what I can for them," she told France's TF1 television in an interview in her home in the eastern French region of Meurthe et Moselle.

## Clinton expects to seek reelection

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton, vowing to champion his agenda over his low popularity said Thursday he intends to seek reelection in 1996. Clinton said he could not see anything that would make him change his mind.

Clinton said he would have taken on all these tough battles and all the interest groups I've taken on the last two years," Mr. Clinton said.

Asked if he could think of "any reasons" that would keep him from seeking a second term in 1996, Mr. Clinton replied: "No. I have my health, and I'm doing a good job."

The declaration of his intentions, coming two years before Mr. Clinton's term ends, was unusual. Most incumbent presidents tend to qualify their plans more than Mr. Clinton did in the interview, often waiting until the year of the election before bluntly stating their candidacy.

In the wake of the Republican landslide in the November congressional and gubernatorial elections, there has been speculation among some Democratic officials and political experts that Mr. Clinton might decide not to seek a second term.

Mr. Clinton brushed aside the possibility that he might be challenged for his party's nomination, saying: "I don't know and I'm not worried about it."

## Major optimistic for U.K. in 1995

LONDON (AFP) — Prime Minister John Major Friday voiced optimism for Britain in 1995, ascribing persistent economic woes to his decision to go for long-term growth rather than a short-term, but "dangerous," populist fix.

In a wide-ranging end-of-year BBC interview recorded earlier, Mr. Major also reaffirmed his commitment to a unified European, saying there would be no concessions to the new Conservative Party, Euro-rebels who have divided his party.

"There is a sea change," he said. "The high tide of federalism in Europe has been reached and is declining. There are still enthusiasts who will argue for it, but I do not myself believe that they will carry the day."

"The argument that we should be in Europe, fighting for the sort of Europe we care about, will carry the day because I believe that is the majority view amongst the British people."

Mr. Major also said he was confident that lasting peace in Northern Ireland was at hand, the will of the people to end violence serving as "a very powerful impetus" towards a political settlement.

Asked about a scathing year of political misfortune that left him and his government at the bottom of opinion polls, Mr. Major said: "Politics is sometimes a bumpy ride. If you're prepared to accept the bumps, don't go in for the ride."

The current economic difficulties were the result of problems going back five years, said Mr. Major, adding that the fruits of recovery had not yet reached people's pockets because the four per cent growth had mainly gone to investment.

"My concern has always been what is right for the country and that is the way we will determine future policy," he said.

Acknowledging delays in implementing the programme, Mr. Major called for patience, saying his government had been saddled with economic problems created by the previous white minority government.

He also said the programme was long-term and needed careful planning.

"Ours is not a programme of quick handouts but one for serious and lasting transformation," Mr. Mandela said.

Commentators question, however, whether it is not already too late for the ANC to avoid a backlash from the millions of homeless, jobless and hungry when it comes to voting in the crucial country-wide municipal elections scheduled for next October.

In an initial phase due to

## CIA director Woolsey resigns — Clinton

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton has announced that Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director James Woolsey had resigned.

A statement released by the White House said Mr. Clinton accepted with regret Mr. Woolsey's resignation and praised his accomplishments in advancing the transformation of U.S. intelligence in the aftermath of the cold war.

The announcement was not entirely a surprise in Washington. Mr. Woolsey's resignation had been rumored for some time, and morale had dropped at the agency after the scandal surrounding Aldrich Ames, a CIA employee convicted of spying for Moscow.

"Jim Woolsey has been a staunch advocate of maintaining an intelligence capability that is second to none," Mr. Clinton said in the statement.

"He has taken initiatives to streamline and improve collection, analysis and dissemination of intelligence, and to ensure that the CIA remains a premier intelligence and management agency after the scandal surrounding Aldrich Ames, a CIA employee convicted of spying for Moscow."

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## Mandela hails an 'epoch-making' 1994

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — President Nelson Mandela Friday hailed 1994 as an "epoch-making" year for South Africa, saying the end of apartheid and the election of a black president marked a turning point in the nation's history.

Mr. Mandela said the year's message to journalists was that the nation can be proud of what was achieved and proud of the future which we conducted since the April elections the new nation unified than ever

and had made "significant progress."

"A national consensus has been forged on the policy to bring a better life to all South Africans," he said, adding that all seven parties that made up the government of national unity were united behind the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to wipe out the injustices of apartheid.

The ANC won 62.6 per cent of the vote and dominates the National Assembly, followed by the former ruling National Party, the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party and four other smaller parties.

Listing his government's achievements, Mr. Mandela said initial plans to imple-

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## Truce violations reported in Liberia

MONROVIA (AFP) — Renewed clashes between Liberia's armed factions were reported less than 24 hours after a ceasefire came into effect to end five years of civil war, U.N. sources said Friday.

However, a U.N. official put the incidents down to a "communication problem" and said there was "no need for alarm" as some fighters may not yet know about the ceasefire.

Clashes were reported Thursday in the southeastern Rivercess County between Charles Taylor's National

Patriotic Front (NPFL) and the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) several hours after the ceasefire took effect at midnight Wednesday.

Each faction has blamed the other for the incident. An LPC official claimed "the ceasefire had to be broken" due to an "unprovoked attack" by NPFL gunmen. But NPFL officials said the LPC launched the attack across a major highway.

Fighting between the two factions has also been reported in the southeastern Grand Bassa County, according to military sources in the capital.

The NPFL has clashed with Roosevelt Johnson's Krahn wing of the United Liberation Movement (ULIMO) at Bong Mines, 75 kilometres (45 miles) north of Monrovia. Johnson confirmed the report but said he had told his men to respect the ceasefire.

Under the ceasefire agreement reached in Ghana, which currently chairs the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Liberia's warlords are to continue informing their fighters about the ceasefire until Jan. 11.

For trade and the economy, the newcomers' membership of the European Economic Area along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has greatly facilitated entry to the EU single big market.

Agriculture and regional aid were the toughest items on the agenda, requiring marathon negotiations early this year.

To avoid too painful a shock to their farmers, who get payments up to twice the rate of EU common agricultural policy tariffs, Austria and Finland are being allowed to continue payments for a while, offsetting the loss of their subsidies.

Sweden has already adjusted its farm payments system and will get financial compensation in recognition of its efforts.

## Politics threaten S. African 'miracle'

JESBURG (AFP) — The peaceful end of 300 years of white rule, a black president, a new government flag and a new world: small South Africans dub "The Year of the

successfully steered through the early transition from apartheid to multi-party democracy, however, President Mandela now faces more daunting challenges owing the lot of the ruling black majority.

Mandela, who, committed to his new role, has yet to bring his "lack of guile" to become the most trusted South African ever. Internationally, his stature has been compared to Mahatma Gandhi.

His polls show that, as part to Mr. Mandela, South Africans are yearning significantly more than they be-

lieved revisited much misery after a decade of violence that left 160,000 dead, growth has slowed, the economy is beginning to falter and foreign investment is being retracted.

South Africa's political future is uncertain. The new government is expected to face a series of challenges, including the need to create jobs, improve the economy, and deal with the legacy of apartheid.

Another commentator, Kaizer Nyatumba of the Johannesburg Star, warned that a "new mood" had replaced the euphoria that swept black townships after April's historic all-race elections brought Mr. Mandela to power.

He said the programme was long-term and needed careful planning.

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Rose presses on with Bosnia truce mission

SARAJEVO (R) — United Nations chiefs in Bosnia Friday pressed ahead with efforts to persuade the warring factions to agree a four-month ceasefire aimed at paving the way to a political settlement of the 33-month war.

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, commander of U.N. forces in Bosnia, held nearly three hours of talks in Sarajevo with Bosnian Vice-President Ejup Ganic and other members of the Muslim-led government.

His immediate superior, General Bertrand De Lapresle, was planning an appeal to rebel Serbs in Croatia in an attempt to bring them into a ceasefire process they have so far ignored.

Gen. Rose's discussions in the Bosnian capital were intended to hammer out remaining details of the ceasefire deal, under which U.N. troops would police buffer zones between the Bosnian Serb and Bosnian government forces.

United Nations spokesman Alex Ivanko told reporters more talks might be needed to finalise matters.

"Another meeting may be necessary to facilitate the full text of the cessation of hostilities agreement," he said, but added: "UNPROFOR (the U.N. Protection Force) still believes an agreement can be signed tomorrow or Sunday."

The proposed four-month ceasefire was the result of a freelance peace mission to Bosnia earlier this month by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

Mr. Carter negotiated a seven-day Christmas ceasefire which stopped most of the fighting in Bosnia except



Santa Claus gives New Year gift-parcels to children in a Sarajevo theatre, in a traditional delivery prepared for children of the theatre employees (AFP photo)

for the Bihac enclave where Croatian Serb and rebel Muslim forces joined attacks on government troops.

The seven-day truce was intended to allow time for talks on the wider, four-month ceasefire.

Gen. Rose and Bosnian Serb military commander General Ratko Mladic said after a meeting Thursday that they still hoped to meet the scheduled Jan. 1 deadline for signing the ceasefire agreement.

Commenting on Gen. Rose's talks in Pale, Mr. Ivanko said: "Significant progress was made in reconciling the draft cessation of hostilities agreement. An

amalgamated text was agreed upon with the Bosnian Serb authorities."

He said Gen. Rose then met Mr. Ganic and other Bosnian officials in Sarajevo and presented them with the revised text of the cessation of hostilities agreement.

Mr. Ivanko added: "The Bosnian government also provided UNPROFOR with its own draft of such an agreement based on previous UNPROFOR drafts. UNPROFOR is now comparing these two drafts and trying to work out a common document."

The Bosnian government has said it wants an end to fighting in the northwestern

Bosnian enclave of Bihac before it will agree the deal.

The United Nations pledged to make efforts to bring the Croatian Serbs, who are not a party to the truce and who have been attacking the Bihac enclave, into the ceasefire process.

Gen. De Lapresle, the overall U.N. military commander, said former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic visited rebel Croatian forces at their headquarters.

Mr. De Lapresle said: "General De Lapresle is planning to visit Knin where he will meet local Arab authorities to try to convince them to respect the letter and spirit of the ceasefire agreement to which they are not signatories."

"UNPROFOR would like to stress the ceasefire continues to hold although violations are still being registered."

Major Herve Gourmelon, a U.N. military spokesman, said: "The area was very quiet throughout the day as the ceasefire continues to take effect. The Bihac pocket is still the most active area, especially around Velika Kladusa."

He said there had been 26 confirmed ceasefire violations across Bosnia over the past 24 hours, six determined to be of joint responsibility, four the fault of the Bosnian government army and 16 assessed as the fault of the Bosnian Serb Army.

Presidential poll will hamper France's EU role

PARIS (AFP) — France's six months in the EU chair starting on New Year's Day will be made more problematic by the election, due in April and May, of a successor to President Francois Mitterrand.

As president of the European Council, France will have to handle the arrival of Austria, Finland and Sweden, bringing European Union (EU) membership to 15 states, and work with a new EU Commission headed by newcomer Jacques Santer of Luxembourg, successor to the long-serving Jacques Delors of France.

To offset the vagaries of domestic politics, the government here has for some months already been coordinating work schedules with the outgoing Germans and the Spaniards who will take over the presidency in mid-year.

The watchword of the French stewardship would be continuity. Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said.

Government and diplomatic sources also expect the French to find time for their pet concerns of relations with Mediterranean states, security in Europe, and European cultural identity.

The timetable drawn up by Paris for meetings of the EU council of ministers is blank for six weeks in April and May because of the French presidential poll, with voting in two rounds on April 23 and May 7.

The winner will have precious little time to be briefed on chairing the EU heads of state and government summit in Cannes on the Riviera at the end of June, when there will be an end-of-term report on the French tenure.

European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassoure admitted the overlapping of European dates and French domestic affairs "will inevitably pose problems for us."

Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, favourite in the opinion polls to win the presidential race, will be expected to conduct government business as usual, while Mr. Juppe is heavily involved in promoting the presidential prospects of Mr. Balladur's rival Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris.

The decision of the Socialist Delors not to run has considerably lessened risks of direct confrontation between proponents and foes of the "federal" Europe so dear to Mr. Delors when he was in Brussels. But debate on the future structure of Europe remains open.

Aftershocks hit quake-stricken Japanese city

HACHINOHE, Japan (R) — Strong aftershocks from a powerful earthquake rumbled through northern Japan Friday and were predicted to continue as residents rushed to clean up before the New Year holiday.

Shoppers buying in for the holiday filled the streets of central Hachinohe, a fishing port 400 kilometres north of Tokyo, which suffered widespread damage when a major quake struck off Japan's Pacific coast late Wednesday night.

As cleanup operations con-

tinued around the clock, city officials said they were worried by seismologists' predictions that aftershocks measuring as high as seven on the open-ended Richter Scale could occur for the next month.

"I'm not certain as to the scientific basis of the prediction, but as it was made by experts, I feel worried," Hachinohe Mayor Nobuo Nakasato told reporters after a government Earthquake Protection Agency Thursday forecast further tremors.

"We're working all out to

restore calm for our citizens, but our opponent is nature," said the visibly tired Nakasato.

Japan's Meteorological Agency reported a total of 256 aftershocks of early Friday.

Wednesday's quake, which measured 7.5 on the open-ended Richter scale, killed two people and badly damaged houses, roads and railway sites around Hachinohe. Some 30,000 households in the city were still without water Friday. Hachinohe has a population of 420,000.

Rao ousts challenger from campaign committee

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao axed challenger Arjun Singh from the Congress Party's Campaign Committee for February's state polls and signalled an imminent shake-up, party leaders said Friday.

Mr. Singh, a powerful party leader who had been included in all key campaign decisions so far, was kept out of the 26-member committee that will devise campaign strategy in five states voting in February, they said.

Congress, which lost power in three of four states that voted last month, faces serious challenges in the upcoming elections.

"Major changes in the party are due," Congress spokesman Ved Prakash told Reuters. "A reorganisation of the Congress (National) Committee is coming up."

Mr. Rao told the Times Of

India in an interview published Friday that he planned to change the president of the party in the southern state of Tamil Nadu and several other states.

It said he was likely to reshuffle his cabinet on New Year's Day.

The recent election defeats were compounded by the resignation last week of Mr. Singh, the human resource development minister, who criticised Mr. Rao's leadership for betraying the interests of the poor and minorities, traditional Congress supporters.

In his resignation letter, Mr. Singh said: "Adhocism and arbitrariness add the will to impose one's own decisions on party members in various states has totally paralysed the initiatives that party members take, and reduced the party to a state of inertia."

Several party leaders, while seeking disciplinary action against Mr. Singh for speaking out, say the issues he raised are relevant.

Mr. Singh had certain reservations to apply to Mr. Rao's resignation.

Other ministers, plagued by scandals, also resigned last week, weakening Mr. Rao's position slightly ahead of the February elections that are only a year away from the central polls due in early 1996.

Mr. Rao, pressured by Mr. Singh and the opposition, removed Health Minister B. Shankaranand and Junior Rural Development Minister Rameshwar Thakur, both criticised by a parliamentary probe into a 1992 \$1.28-billion stock market scandal.

Food Minister Kalpana Rai, blamed in an official probe into a sugar import scandal, lost his job. The resignation of Civil Supplies Minister A.K. Antony, who also quit over the sugar scandal, has not yet been accepted.

In his resignation letter, Mr. Singh criticised the current economic reform programme initiated by Mr. Rao in 1991.

"A perception has emerged that liberalisation of economic policy perhaps has become liberalisation of corruption," he wrote.

Uttar Pradesh party chief Narain Dutt Tiwari said Mr. Rao should address himself "seriously" to the issues Mr. Singh raised. "What we need is a new look Congress Party," he said after Mr. Singh resigned.

Spanish row over anti-ETA operations deepens

MADRID (R) — Spain's minority Socialist government faced growing pressure Friday to respond to allegations that it masterminded illicit operations against Basque guerrilla sympathisers in the 1980s.

The Justice and Interior Minister, Juan Alberto Belloch, told a special session of the parliamentary committee which monitors his department: "We must respect the judicial process and assume the innocence of those involved."

But Antonio Romero of the United Left Movement called Mr. Belloch's presentation to the committee "empty of content" and Popular Party spokesman Francisco Alvarez Cascos said the government had to explain what it knew about the situation.

The arrest last week of Julian Sancristobal, a former head of state security who is suspected of links with the shadowy anti-terrorist Liberation Group (GAL), blew up into a political storm that has provoked opposition calls for an early general election

and caused turmoil in nervous financial markets.

Press interviews by two former policemen who were convicted in 1991 of GAL activities sought to implicate two ex-cabinet members of involvement.

One of the ex-ministers, Jose Barrionuevo, who once held the interior portfolio, has said he will sue for libel.

Opposition parliamentarians said today that government reticence over GAL could backfire on Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez.

Mr. Belloch was obliged to appear in parliament only after the Socialists' Catalan allies in parliament insisted.

"I can say to you, Mr. Belloch, that if the judges condemn Sancristobal, it will be a political condemnation of Gonzalez," Mr. Alvarez Cascos said.

The probe into GAL, which began in 1983 and 1987, killed 16 people in a secret war on ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom), followed a series of corruption scandals that have progressively weakened Mr. Gonzalez's 12-

year old premiership.

But Mr. Belloch, who as a Basque country judge in the 1980s was among those who most fiercely attacked GAL activities, denied the government was obstructing investigations and promised full cooperation within the constraints of the law. "My task is to convince you this ministry will collaborate fully with judges," he said, recalling the case before the courts.

He said that in his opinion the published interviews with former Bilbao Police Chief Jose Amedo and ex-Inspector Miguel Dominguez were contradictory. But, he added, this was up to the judges to assess.

Mr. Gonzalez, at a news conference Thursday, denied any government involvement in GAL activities. "Let this be once and for all clear, so as not to have to keep on insisting," he said.

His words offered scant reassurance to financial markets Thursday, though stock and the value of the peseta steadied Friday in what dealers called a technical reaction.

El Pais, in an editorial Friday, said Mr. Gonzalez had been convincing at the news conference, but added that he could be in danger of losing credibility in the eyes of the general public.

The political situation is so serious that many, and from diverse backgrounds, are arguing early elections or the prime minister's resignation," it said.

Under these circumstances, it added that Mr. Gonzalez himself should appear in parliament to give a full account.

Opposition leader Jose Maria Aznar said Mr. Gonzalez had lost the capacity to govern and urged that a general election be called within six months. But he again rejected a call for a motion of censure as it would not prosper.

Catalan leader Jordi Pujol, in a newspaper interview Thursday, said he was not withdrawing the parliamentary support of his Convergencia i Unio's 17 seats, which give the Socialists a one-seat majority in the lower house.

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نقدم بالشكر الجزيل للمواطن الاردني على دعمه لنا خلال عام 1994

آملين ان يستمر هذا الدعم في الاعوام القادمة

شركة احمد عيسى مراد

الادارة العامة، تلفون ٨٣٧٢٩٠ شارع الجامعة

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS

سامسونج

في الاردن



Mohammad Ibrahim Daoud, a communist in Al-Dustour, said that the government had given promises to apply a comprehensive health insurance scheme covering all citizens, to deal with unemployment and also reduce poverty. He said that the government is in need of carefully selected and efficient cadres of employees to deal with these issues and to keep its promises. The government needs to put the right person in the right position and choose a youth with certain specializations that can handle such chronic issues and relieve the security of heavy burdens.

Indeed, we are in need of a revolutionary movement in the public administration in



# Features

## Established Soviet-era immigrants balk at newcomers

By Doina Chiacu  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Before communism crumbled, immigrants from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe flocked to the United States for freedom and democracy. Today they come for something else.

"Now you have people who just want to get rich. It doesn't matter how," said Ena Ghyka of Arlington, VA, who fled Romania in 1976.

"It's a different breed, completely different," said Irene Nikitin, 71, of San Francisco, a World War II refugee from Kiev.

The latest wave of immigrants from Russia and its former satellites is getting a chilly reception from some of those who came before.

Communist-era refugees were escaping political or religious persecution, which gave their immigrant status a martyr-like glow, they see the newcomers as everything from rude to morally bankrupt, lured to the United States by videocassette recorders and fast cars. And they hold the Iron Curtain responsible.

"The people on top of the social pyramid were stealing — there was no morality. Everybody was stealing, everybody was cheating. Ten years it became a habit, built into their nervous system," said Andrew Kaweck, 58, a staff writer for the Polish Daily News in Chicago.

Mr. Kaweck said he had the same "bad habits" to break when he came from Poland 20 years ago, but it may be harder for those who lived that way longer.

"Some newcomers are cheating everyone from IRS to friends," Mr. Kaweck said, referring to the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. tax agency. "They wouldn't obey the rules. They are destroyed from the inside. And it's not their fault. It's the system."

Newcomers don't deny a communist society left a mark on its people.

"We were as blind cats in former Soviet Union because we believed in communism and other things," said Lyba Mikityanskaya, who arrived from Ukraine last year. "Now we come to this country and we see we were wrong."

But they point out that life has gotten harder in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, with anti-Semitism, crime and ethnic clashes on the rise.

"People who are coming now are much more like refugees, escaping a war zone," said Vladimir Vishnevsky, 36, who came from Russia 30 years ago. "People who came before were like prisoners escaping prison."

Yes, they long for a better life, he said. And why shouldn't they?

Friction between the old guard and newcomers is nothing new in this country of immigrants, said Arthur Helton, director of migration

programmes at the Open Society Institute. Those who settled on the lower east side of Manhattan at the turn of the century. For example, were "reviled and demonized" by other Americans, including those who came before, he said.

But a fierce ideological conflict, now as dead as the cold war and the "evil empire," makes this situation unique in recent immigrant history.

"It's a difference between people who are brought up under a totalitarian, communist, payralistic system and those who have absolutely no knowledge of that kind of system," said Pauline Bilus, head of Action for Russian Immigrants. A resettlement programme in Brighton Beach in the New York city borough of Brooklyn.

"We're talking primarily about a 70- to 75-year gap — or what I call a black hole — of people who have lived under this totalitarian system. This great experiment that became a dismal failure."

So dismal that many people didn't want to stay to pick up the pieces.

Immigration to the United States from the region has increased sharply since the Iron Curtain rose. Immigrants admitted from former Soviet republics alone went from 11,100 in 1989 to 58,500 in 1993. According to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service.

In Brighton Beach, a boardwalk community of up to 60,000 Russian immigrants. "Nyet" is more common than "No" on the streets and many stores use the Cyrillic alphabet.

Ms. Bilus says tensions between immigrants are normal. "People will always look down on the new kid on the block."

But Russians in Brighton Beach have become so identified with crime, particularly life organised kind, that established immigrants in the New York area formed a group to protect Russian speakers from discrimination.

In Ms. Ghyka's Romanian circle, the newcomers and established emigres tend to avoid each other.

"We're different, it's a big difference in mentality, and in values," she said. "For this reason, the Romanians try not to be in contact with other Romanians."

Sven Zabelin of San Francisco, who has helped fellow Russian speakers settle in the area, has a more detached view of their situation.

"People take two generations to arrive at some kind of — if I can call it a normal — society," said Mr. Zabelin, 71, who was born in Croatia to Russian parents and left in 1947. "It will take time to get rid of the whole pervasive influence of hie party. It will take time to clean all that up — for the Romanians, Bulgarians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks — that's why they are going through such pains."

## Russians bog down around Grozny

(Continued from page 1)

out a responsible and dangerous combat duty," TASS quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying. "Everyone will be thinking about you this New Year," he said from the Kremlin in Moscow.

Russians have sent plane loads of presents to troops in Chechnya for New Year, traditionally the biggest holiday in Moscow.

Dozens of Russian soldiers are among the many victims of the fighting so far. There are no reliable figures from either side but reporters in Grozny say Chechen casualties there are high, hospitals are full of injured civilians

and short of drugs.

Mr. Yeltsin said the campaign would lead to a safer, more peaceful Russia.

"Those who are impatiently awaiting your return and who will raise their glass to you this New Year's Eve are depending on you for a peaceful and calm 1995," he was quoted as saying in an address released by his press secretary.

"I am sure the people of Chechnya will see the importance of what you are doing, in the name of preserving the homeland, the united and indivisible Russia," Mr. Yeltsin was quoted as saying.

## Russia to go ahead with oil export reform plan

MOSCOW (R) — Russia will go ahead with a plan to reform its oil export system that has drawn sharp criticism from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Davydov has said.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Mr. Davydov as saying export quotas and licences would be scrapped and replaced with a system of compulsory deliveries to domestic consumers.

The plan to introduce compulsory domestic deliveries, aimed at preventing a stampede to more lucrative export markets, has been denounced

by the IMF and World Bank as just another barrier to Russia maximising its export earnings.

The international lending agencies have linked oil export liberalisation to future credits, vital not only for rehabilitating the oil sector but also for budget financing.

TASS also quoted Mr. Davydov as saying the number of "special exporters", or companies authorised to export oil, would be reduced to 12 from the present 14. The World Bank has called for the abolition of special exporters.

Mr. Davydov said the new

By Nanna Mwaluko  
Reuters

NAIROBI — The appointment of Africa's first woman vice-president has focused attention on why so few African women enter politics and only a much smaller minority reach high office.

Two recent international meetings — the U.N. Population Conference in Cairo in September and the fifth African Regional Conference on Women in Senegal last month — put women's liberation and empowerment at the forefront of their concerns.

But both took place on the world's poorest continent, where half its population as women are stifled by cultural and sexual taboos. No one expects the conferences to provoke rapid change.

"Women politicians in Africa have to fight prejudices in society and an environment not conducive to success," said Maria Nzoimo, a Nairobi University senior

lecturer in political science. The idea that women are less capable has long been in society. They face also increasingly more hardship as they lack enough funds," she said, noting that traditionally African women are barred from owning property.

Reset by poverty — sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest number of people under the international poverty line — women are well aware of the host of hurdles to a political life.

Many say they are forced to toe the party line of their male opposite numbers who wheel and deal in the political arena while women take a socially accepted backseat as merely token leaders.

On being named, Uganda's Ande Wandira Kazibwe said "women in Uganda should know that privileges, according to us by government will have to go with responsibilities. I am ready to show my worth."

Ms. Kazibwe retained her

previous position of minister of gender (women's) community development, a rare portfolio in Africa.

Male newspaper commentators in Uganda's capital Kampala praised President Yoweri Museveni's decision to appoint Ms. Kazibwe, saying he had sewn up the women's vote for elections next year.

"At campaigns, women are jeered at and depicted as frustrated divorcees in politics as a last resort. African women don't like to vote or study politics," said politics student Mary Mwangi.

"Men feel you will steal the political spotlight and because we are so few they throw mud and slander us," said Agnes Ndeti, a parliamentarian and the foremost woman in Kenya's opposition.

"But none of us have defected (to the ruling Kanu Party) because we believe in what we are doing," she added.

Lip service to equality is increasingly paid by leaders in Africa because of increased solidarity among women demanding a greater say in the continent, but gains are few and far between.

Tanzania's founding President Julius Nyerere was embarrassed this month as chairman of a two-day conference in Nairobi on Africa's political and economic agenda for the year 2000 when a woman complained to him about the handful of women present.

Conference organisers, asked by Mr. Nyerere to explain, said more women had been invited but many had failed to turn up.

Women's development and progress in politics received a hard blow in April with the killing of Rwanda's Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, who fought for ethnic repression and an end to women's oppression in the tiny central African state.

Ms. Uwilingiyimana, 41,

entered politics in 1992 shortly after then president Juvenal Habyarimana bowed to the wind of change sweeping across Africa and allowed multi-party politics.

A dynamic, shrewd woman who preached tribal tolerance in a nation where ethnic allegiance is seen as all-important, she led a tough fight against women being depicted as the weak sex who should be shunted out of public service.

At a political rally in the capital Kigali, Mr. Habyarimana singled out his prime minister by shouting: "You, woman!"

Ms. Uwilingiyimana stood and replied: "Don't call me that. I am not your wife."

Only the second African woman to serve as a prime minister, Ms. Uwilingiyimana was slaughtered by members of the presidential guard on April 6 despite being under the escort of U.N. guards.

The three-month blood-

bath that followed the assassination of Mr. Habyarimana killed up to one million people across Rwanda.

In neighbouring Burundi, Sylvie Kinigi was appointed prime minister only on the eve of the killing of President Melchior Ndadaye by renegade Tutsi troops in October last year.

Diplomats said she reluctantly accepted the post as she had felt she could achieve more by remaining the civil service head in charge of economic planning in the prime minister's office.

An elegant, soft-spoken but straight-talking 41-year-old, Ms. Kinigi abandoned her political life when her cabinet collapsed last February and now works for Burundi's Commercial Bank.

"I am not outside of politics but I have left the political scene," Mr. Kinigi, a now largely sidelined campaigner for tolerance in a country almost boiling with the opposite, told Reuters.

## African women's hard, dangerous life in politics

## U.N. General Assembly supports moves to eliminate land mines

In a report to the assembly earlier this year, the United Nations said the only way to stop the devastation created by the estimated 10 million land mines scattered throughout the world is to ban their production.

"Land mines may be one of the most widespread, lethal, and long lasting forms of pollution we have yet encountered, and we are currently losing the battle to protect innocent civilians from their effects," the report said.

"Even with significant increases in demining efforts worldwide and foreseeable advances in technology, it will be impossible to solve the global land mine problem unless their proliferation is halted."

"The best and most effective way to achieve this is to ban completely the production, use and transfer of all land mines. Member states are invited to consider establishing such a ban as a matter of urgency."

During the assembly's first committee debate on land mines, U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy said "every 15 minutes of every day, of every week, of every month, of every year, that we delay, another person falls victim to a land mine."

In the past 12 months alone, approximately two million more land mines have been laid. But during that same period in every country represented here, the number of people demanding an end to this senseless slaughter has continued to grow."

Mr. Leahy, a member of the U.S. delegation to the 49th assembly session, has spearheaded in both the U.S.

Congress and the United Nations efforts to get a worldwide moratorium on the export of land mines.

Mr. Leahy said the resolution puts all countries on record in support of the eventual elimination of these weapons. "This is a major step forward. It should end the debate about the need for the goal of the eventual elimination of anti-personnel land mines," he said.

In a second resolution, also adopted by consensus, the assembly supported the conference which will convene in September 1995 to review the 1980 Conventional Weapons Treaty in order to strengthen the protocol on land mines.

A special meeting of experts will be held in January to begin planning for the review conference.

The treaty, officially

known as the "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects," and a related protocol on the use of mines, booby traps and other devices, entered into force in December 1983. They ban the use of land mines against civilians, forbid the planting of mines by planes unless records are kept on where they are sown and require records be kept on all mine placement. However, only 36 nations have ratified the treaty and its protocols.

In its resolution the assembly called on states to become parties to the convention and its protocols and called on the maximum number of states to attend the review conference.

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Of all the debris left after a conflict, land mines are the most widespread and pernicious, the U.N. says. In addition to the estimated 110 million that already exist, it says that between 2 and 5 million more are being laid each year.

According to the U.N., the countries most affected are: Afghanistan with 9 to 10 million mines; Angola with nine to 15 million mines; Iraq with five to 10 million; Kuwait with five million; Cambodia with eight to 10 million; Western Sahara with one to two million; Mozambique with one to two million; and Somalia, Bosnia and Croatia with one million mines each.

The U.N. says that other countries with lands mines include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Colombia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Iran, Laos, Liberia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Peru, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, Vietnam and Yemen. Australia and Antarctica are perhaps the only continents free of mine fields.

## Feminist poet represents Mandela in Paris

By Sanja Gohre  
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — The first ambassador of the new South Africa to Paris is a poet, the sister of a famous jazz trumpeter and an unabashed fan of Nelson Mandela.

Barbara Masekela, 53, also feels strongly about the fact that she is the only woman among the first 16 ambassadors named by Mandela's government this month.

"South Africa is full of talented women... they have been found and they must be found. It does not fit the image as a democratic country not to have women in these positions," she said in an interview.

"It's incumbent on the government to find them," Ms. Masekela, who takes up her post on Jan. 1, points out that she and other prominent figures in Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) came from poor families.

"That reminds us of who we are... my brother and I always wanted to remember that so that we couldn't lose

ourselves. We always knew we would come back. And when we came home we would work towards the improvement of our society."

Both Barbara Masekela and her musician brother Hugh went into exile in their youth because of apartheid.

"There was a hardening of the apartheid regime... It was very clear that opportunities were beginning to narrow and anybody opposed to apartheid was in danger. One had to choose to remain or find opportunities elsewhere."

She was in London when she met Mandela and was asked to help prepare for a visit he made to the United States after his release from jail in February, 1990.

Mr. Mandela, clearly impressed, asked her to become his personal assistant.

"You can't imagine what it was like for me with our president," she said. "It almost seemed as though there was no problem that was too large for him to tackle and that he has always been able to emerge out of any situation with great dignity."



Nelson Mandela

Apart from raising funds and building cultural relations with France, she hopes to build South Africa's relationship with French-speaking African countries.

"I think it is utterly disgraceful that we are on the continent and know so little and do so little with the other Africans who speak French on the continent," she said. "It is my task to bring investment to South Africa. I

can tell them about the plight of my people."

"I hope that I can let people in France understand and appreciate the diversity of the culture of South Africa and that we actually have a new democratic culture emerging..."

"If I can demonstrate the humanity of my president, the caring of my president and the wisdom of his leadership, then I will become a good diplomat."

Ms. Masekela lived the first 10 years of her life with her grandmother, who had married a white man, in the eastern Transvaal mining town of Witbank. She then moved to her parents in Alexandra township outside Johannesburg.

"My granny was a great influence on me. She was the original independent woman."

During her 27 years in exile Ms. Masekela lived in Ghana, Britain, Zambia and the United States. Asked about her feelings on returning home, she said:

"We dreamed about how it would be. But reality is quite different..."

"We didn't know that we

would come here for four years and that there would be overwhelming violence and that when we would be in the country we would be in danger. One thought of liberation as kind of walking in and having change immediately."

Ms. Masekela said one of the reasons she was looking forward to going to Paris was because the media there were not obsessed with "piffle and sleaze."

"I think it's an utter disgrace the way people's private lives are paraded in front of the press..."

"Really what's important about me, about you, is what do we bring to the lives of other people in this society, how do we contribute to uplifting our people."

"I'm glad I'm going to France actually, because in France you don't have that kind of focus."

She said her poetry was inspired by her private feelings but she had yet to publish any.

"One day I will when I have the time. I have been saying that for many years. I haven't had time to focus on myself."

## What alternative to abolishing homework?

By Joe Pisani

IS NOTHING sacred in America? Homework was once a hallowed tradition ranking right up there with detention, fraternity hazing and income tax. It was a milestone in the development of Western civilisation, one of the few remaining ways to inflict pain on youngsters.

Moreover, homework teaches kids skills they'll need to succeed in the real

workaday world, such as evading responsibility, cutting corners and plagiarising.

Yet in California an outspoken school board member has come up with a plan to abolish homework, which begs the question: is he getting paid off in baby-sitting dollars? Banning homework has taken on the intensity of other historic social ideals such as taxation without representation or tyranny, and

housework should be shared.

The furor began when Garrett Redmond, a trustee with the Cabrillo Unified School District, introduced a proposal in Half Moon Bay, California, to abolish homework because it puts an unbearable strain on family life; it is unjust, and it wastes too much time. Also, it destroys home life and favours students whose parents are smart enough to do it for

their kids. And there's a fundamental inequity between poor students and well-to-do students, who can tap into the Internet and CD-ROMs.

Finally, it's a financial burden on the taxpayer, because textbooks get worn out by being carried back and forth to school.

Did I forget anything? Mr. Redmond, who belongs to a five-member school board that oversees the education system for 3,500 students in a district stretching 22 kilometres along the coast south of San Francisco, wasn't joking. His proposal has provoked discussion among students, parents and teachers — not to mention academics, who are never at a loss for an opinion on any topic.

In reality, homework is rarely taken seriously by teachers, parents or students. Every kid I know, including four in my own family, is clamouring to be represented on the local school board so they can draft initiatives to end homework once and for all.

I was therefore astounded by the Half Moon Bay horror stories of students slaving to complete up to six hours

homework a night.

What country is this? Japan? The former Soviet Union? According to the president of the school board, the district's 3,500 students spend some 10,000 hours every night doing homework.

"That's a lot of hours," he concluded sagely.

Mr. Redmond said his daughter, who was valedictorian of her eighth-grade class last year, usually spends five hours a night on homework, and those are hours he'd rather she spent with him, even if it means watching TV together.

After all, watching Melrose Place or Married... With Children will give kids an education they'll never get in the classroom.

Do young people, who already watch dozens of hours of TV a week, need more time to watch even more TV? Did Mr. Redmond ever consider giving up some of his TV time to help his daughter with her homework? Helping our children with spelling and arithmetic is about the only interaction some of us have, however volatile.

Don't you love providing

adult supervision on social studies and science projects? I can still remember the time my dad helped me build a wind tunnel for the eighth-grade science fair. In a fervent father-son cooperative effort, we almost burned the house down.

When it comes to homework, there are two extremes: parents who don't care what their kids do, and parents who do the assignments themselves. Parental assistance can be seen when a second-grader's composition comes back written in compound complex sentences, or when a ninth-grader's algebra assignment comes back entirely wrong.

On the other hand, maybe the California proposition deserves serious study.

Banning homework might help overworked and underpaid parents, who are tired of doing their kids



# Economy

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1994

## Dollar set for rollercoaster ride in 1995

LONDON (R) — Investors may be able to breathe a sigh of relief now the dollar is finally clawing its way higher, but the upturn is only likely to last until the summer, financial analysts said Friday.

They had yet to dot the "i"s and cross the "t"s" on forecasts for next year but in the main saw a Deutsche-mark upturn in the second half of 1995 putting paid to the dollar rally.

"Further Federal Reserve tightening in the first half of next year means the dollar will remain strong but in the second half other countries, Germany in particular, will start to tighten," said James Montier, economist at Kleinwort Benson.

The U.S. currency rode out 1994 on a subdued note, suffering an unexpected blow from political and economic

problems in southern neighbour Mexico.

The threat of dollars flooding the market if Mexico moved to support a recently devalued peso led to a sudden end-of-the-year dollar slide. The United States has extended a \$6 billion line of credit to Mexico and there were market fears this had already begun to be drawn down, although the U.S. Treasury denied this.

In any event, the dollar fall has been in the thinnest of markets, and analysts said that come the new year the mood would brighten again for the U.S. unit.

"I don't think it's indicative of how it's going to be for the rest of the year," said Dudley Rouse, a director at American Express Bank in London. "The dollar is still bid."

The Federal Reserve (Fed) is expected to tighten monetary policy by 0.50 or 0.75 percentage point at the next two-day meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee at the end of the January.

While this would widen the yield differential between the U.S. and Germany further, there will come a time when the Bundesbank decides to do an about-face on monetary policy following its gradual easing since the second half of 1992.

"A move by the Bundesbank to tighten policy, at a time when the Fed may be moving in the opposite direction, should bolster confidence in the mark," said Mark Cliffe, chief international economist at Midland Global Markets Research.

Also the mark will be one

of the few currencies with buying power next year as political and economic problems continue elsewhere, and its firm tone versus other European currencies will help it rise against the dollar.

"Looking at the other European currencies the mark is really the only sensible choice," Kleinwort Montier said. He noted that political worries in France, Britain, Italy and Spain will take their toll and in Scandinavia debt problems will continue to drag on the Swedish and Norwegian crowns.

Analysts also noted that the market was currently ignoring the huge internal and external deficits in the United States but these could easily become a focus later in 1995.

The dollar's year-end comeback against the yen will

also extend into 1995 but gains are likely to be limited, analysts said. The U.S.-Japan trade dispute will linger as a major concern in the foreign exchange market but will not cause as much of a stir as it did this year, they added.

The dollar could rise to around 165 yen and possibly to 185 in the first quarter of next year, said Masamichi Yasuda, chief dealer at Bank of Tokyo. He said that although there were signs Japan's huge trade surplus was shrinking, it was too early to judge whether it would turn into a long-term trend.

The dollar was ending 1994 around 150 yen marks and 94.50 yen, down around 11 per cent, but it had been lower. In October it touched its trough at around 148.50 marks and 96.00 yen, around 14 per cent down on the year.

## Big powers complete new trade body launch

GENEVA (R) — The United States, the European Union and Canada joined Friday in a symbolic ceremony clearing the way for the launch of Jan. 1 of the new World Trade Organisation (WTO).

To champagne toast, envoys of the three big trading powers, including officials of the 12 current EU countries, handed over documents confirming their ratification of the international treaty that sets up the WTO.

The formal act meant that all four members of the "quad" group that dominates the world trading scene were on board for the WTO launch. Japan delivered its ratification instruments on Tuesday, earlier than the

others for "technical reasons."

"This is a historic occasion for the United States and for the other countries that have accepted the agreement," U.S. acting chief of mission to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Andrew Stoler, told Reuters.

"It is a great achievement that together with the United States and Canada we could ratify and then deposit the ratification instruments together ahead of Jan. 1," said Jean-Pierre Leng, the European Union's ambassador.

In a message from Spain where he is on holiday, GATT chief Peter Sutherland who becomes interim head of the WTO, said the fact that at least 85 countries had now ratified or accepted the accord was "a marvellous start" for the new body.

These accounts for the vast bulk of world trade. "It is a very good omen for the future," he declared. GATT currently has 125 members, and eventually some 145 are expected to come into the new organisation.

The WTO is the centrepiece of the world trade treaty negotiated over seven years in GATT's Uruguay Round. It cuts tariffs by an average of more than one third and opens markets for services, farm produce and textiles.

Over the coming year, it will absorb GATT, which has lasted 46 years as a "temporary body" because of the big traders' failure in the late 1940s to agree on a more powerful body.

Both Mr. Stoler and Mr. Leng said they believed trade conflicts between Washing-

ton and Brussels would be less likely in the WTO, although difficulties which in GATT have brought them on occasion to the brink of trade wars — would remain.

"Many of the trade disputes that characterised the 1980s resulted from the perfect rules that were viewed differently by the sides," said Mr. Stoler.

With the new treaty, he added, and specially in the area of farming subsidies which were at the centre of many disputes, "I think we have a better set of rules and a shared understanding of what the rules are."

Both expressed disappointment that there had been no agreement before the new year on a permanent head for the new body. "It is certainly a failure on the part of governments that they could not reach a consensus for Jan. 1," said Mr. Leng.

But the two envoys indicated they stood firmly behind their rival candidates for the post — Italy's ex-Trade Minister Renato Ruggiero for the EU and former Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari for the United States and Latin America.

In GATT member head count, Mr. Ruggiero is well ahead, followed by South Korea's former Trade Minister Kim Chul-Su — who has the backing of Asian and Pacific region states.

"It is true that we have three good candidates," said Mr. Stoler, "but I think that President Salinas who stepped down as Mexico's head of state on Dec. 11 has demonstrated in a real-life environment his commitment to liberal trading regime."

## Israel boosts defence spending in 1995

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The Israeli parliament Friday approved a \$49 billion budget for 1995 which included a 7.9 per cent increase in defence spending, officials said.

Defence spending was increased to \$8.3 billion or 17.8 per cent of the total budget, and includes \$1.8 billion in U.S. military aid.

The budget was adopted by 58 votes for compared with 41 against.

Five deputies from the Communist Party and the Arab Democratic Party voted against, to protest the small amount of public aid for the 800,000 Arab minority and 70,000 Druze.

Funding for the internal security service Shin Bet and the Mossad intelligence service is not included in defence spending and is to remain unchanged, at about \$350 million.

The Treasury has forecast a budget deficit of \$3.3 billion

next year, or 2.75 per cent of the Gross National Product (GNP), compared with three per cent in 1994.

Spending on integrating new immigrants will remain fixed at \$3.8 billion, even though 70,000 people are expected to arrive in Israel mainly from the new republics of the former Soviet Union, according to the Treasury.

Investment in infrastructure, especially roads, will go up to a record \$3.5 billion.

The Israeli economy roared ahead in 1994 as the Gross Domestic Product (GNP) jumped 6.8 per cent to push the annual per capita income to \$13,730, the General Bureau of Statistics has announced.

In its year-end estimates for 1994, the bureau favourably compared Israel's economic performance as measured by GDP growth and lower unemployment to that

of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.

The comparison also highlighted the country's inflation and trade deficit problems.

The nation's economy expanded faster than all 24 OECD countries. Israel also leads OECD countries with a 4.3 per cent rise in GDP per capita.

Unemployment, which fell from 10 per cent last year to 7.6 per cent this year, ranked Israel ninth among OECD countries with the lowest jobless rates.

By contrast, Israel had the highest trade deficit and second highest inflation rate in the group. The deficit jumped from 2.4 per cent of GDP to 4.1 per cent. Similarly, consumer inflation, which totalled 12.3 per cent this year, was second only to Turkey's 106 per cent annual inflation rate.

Israel's per capita income last year of \$12,375 was lower than Japan's \$33,900, the U.S.'s \$24,300, France's

\$21,700, and England's \$15,900, but was higher than Spain's \$12,200.

Most of the economy's expansion occurred in the second half of last year. During the first half of the year the GDP grew 5 per cent, expanding at a more moderate 4 per cent in the second half of the year.

The business product, which measures the GDP, excluding public and housing services, jumped 7.9 per cent from 3.5 per cent. The expansion reflects 8 per cent industrial production growth and a 7.2 per cent increase in the building sector. Trade and services surged 9 per cent, while agriculture shrank 4 per cent.

Although business leaders have been complaining about eroding profitability, private sector labour productivity actually increased this year by 0.2 per cent, after dropping in the previous two years. Only when the public sector is included, productivity remained unchanged.

## Syria exporting 360,000 b/d of crude oil

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria is exporting around 360,000 barrels per day (b/d) of crude oil, an estimated daily production of 600,000 b/d, Oil Minister Nader Nabulsi has said.

The minister said oil revenue was providing the country with between 68 and 70 per cent of its foreign currency earnings and accounted around 17 per cent of Syria's gross domestic product, which amounted to \$20 billion last year.

Addressing parliament, the minister said Syria had to tap pumped over 338 million tonnes of crude oil from its oilfields all over the country. A copy of his address, delivered this week, was obtained by Reuters Friday.

Mr. Nabulsi said surveys showed there were 623 sites which might have crude oil in Syria. About 285 of them were drilled and oil was found at 122.

The minister, who began his career as an oil engineer at the Syrian Petroleum Company in the late 1960s and then studied in the United States, said that more than 2,650 wells were drilled.

He said Syria first found oil in 1957 at the Karachouk field, in the far northeast of the country close to the Turkish border. Syria exported the first oil in 1968. Production during that year was about one million tonnes

(20,000 b/d).

Syria's oil output, which was all heavy crude at that time, reached a peak of 11 million tonnes (220,000 b/d) in 1976, but production began to decline starting from that year, the minister said.

He said production of the heavy crude went down to around eight million tonnes (160,000 b/d) in 1978 and continued at the same rate since then.

Light crude was first produced in 1985 from oilfields which were discovered at the Dayr Az Zawr area, close to the Iraqi border. The oil is one of the best in the world, the minister said.

About 440,000 b/d are now being produced from 22 oilfields in the area by the Al Fara Company, 50 per cent owned by Syria's petroleum company, 18.75 per cent by Germany's Deminor, 15.625 per cent by Poesten (U.S. Shell) and 15.625 by Syria Shell (Royal Dutch Shell).

He said that out of 22 international companies, who explored for oil in Syria during the 1980s, four found oil and the others left the country. Those who left spent \$680 million.

Mr. Nabulsi said Syria was also producing around 6.36 million cubic metres (226.6 million cubic feet) per day of gas from three gas treatment plants.

## Zaire's premier vows to purge public sector heads

KINSHASA (R) — Zairean Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo has promised to purge state companies and end decades of mismanagement and corruption.

Speaking to executives of all 56 state-owned corporations summoned to a meeting in the capital the centrist premier said their firms' contributions to state finances had become more and more insignificant since independence from Belgium in 1960.

"Many executives have behaved like veritable predators, making no distinction between their wallets and their companies' cash registers... rest assured, we will put a stop to all these practices, which verge on the anarchic," he said.

Mr. Kengo said only four of the 56 had been able to meet a government request

for detailed reports and none of those four were of any use either technically or financially.

"Many today are in a bankrupt state and should simply go into voluntary liquidation," he said.

Mr. Kengo said his government planned to improve performance with a series of "draconian measures," including a reduction in tax exemptions, an end to fixed prices and abolition of monopoly status for all but strategic and essential firms.

The government would soon draw up a list of which companies were still viable, which should stay in the state sector, which should be liquidated or turned into public services, and which were possible candidates for privatisation, he added.

Mr. Kengo said that given

Zaire's enormous size, plans were under way to decentralise many of the companies, turning their provincial branches into autonomous units.

"Punishment will be severe... from now on you will be judged by your own people," he warned executives.

Mr. Kengo has been ridiculed by opponents for basing his \$311 million 1995 budget proposal on dramatic increases in revenue from state-owned copper mining giant Gecamines and diamond producer MIBA.

Once Zaire's biggest foreign currency earner, Gecamines is on the verge of bankruptcy and has made no contribution to state coffers for years. MIBA benefits from generous tax exemptions.

Mr. Kengo insisted that 1995 would be a hard year

and cooperation would have to make their contributions to the state budget.

He also addressed fears that a division of senior posts in the public sector, agreed as part of a coalition agreement with supporters of President Mobutu Sese Seko, would perpetuate the kind of political favouritism he has sworn to eliminate.

Previously the key public sector jobs went to Mr. Mobutu supporters but the agreement says they are now to be shared equally with his political opponents.

Mr. Kengo said new appointments would be made on the basis of professional competence alone and candidates would have to choose between careers as politicians or managers — they could not do both.

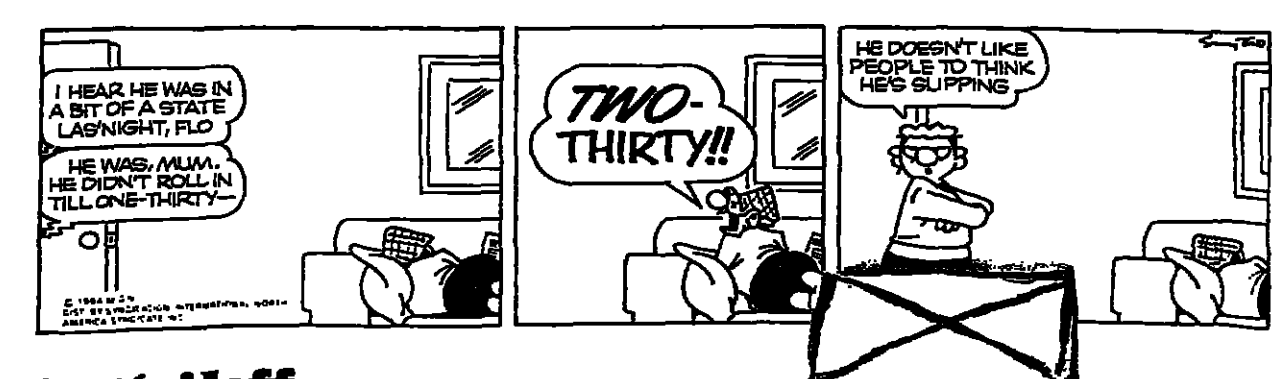
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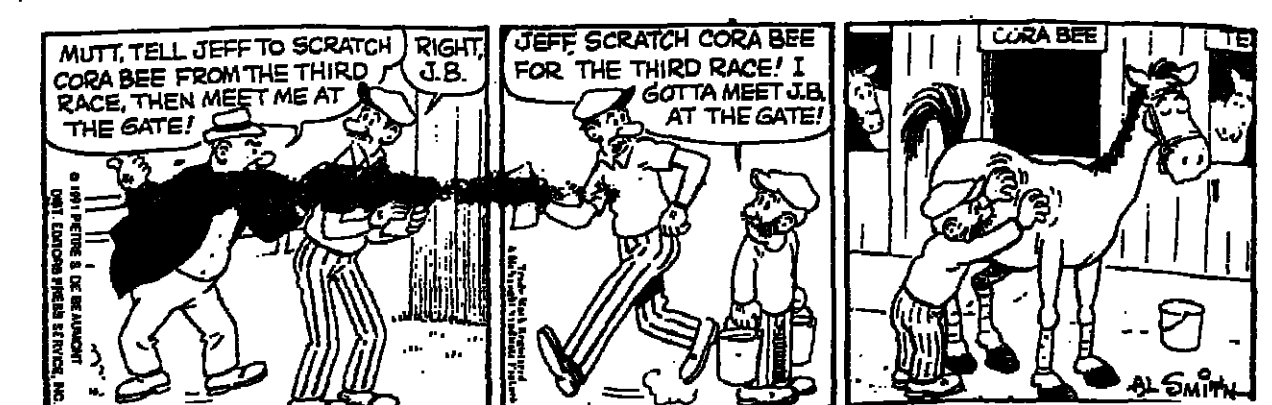
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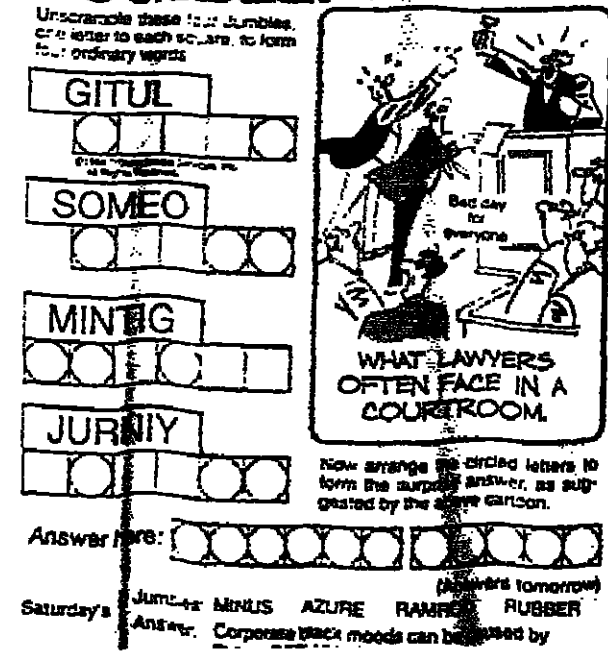
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## THE BETTER HALF



## JUMBLE



## THE Daily Crossword





## Merrill Lynch maintains DM/USD1.55 and JPY/USD 92 forecasts

The following report, covering the period from Thursday, Dec. 22, 1994 until Wednesday, Dec. 28, 1994, was provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch — Dubai

### Currency outlook

#### Overview

**Fundamental View:** In a Christmas-holidays shortened trading week, the dollar held on to the gains since the Nov. 8 Republican victory in mid-term U.S. elections, to trade around DM/USD 1.57 and JPY/USD 100 levels. As expected, the Fed declined to raise rates again at its Dec. 20 FOMC meeting and the focus now is on the next FOMC meeting on Jan. 31-Feb. 1. A 50 basis point hike in the Fed funds rate is expected at this meeting. A similar hike is expected at the March 31 meeting.

If that turns out to be the peaking of U.S. rates as our December forecast assumes, the dollar rally may not have much further to go. If U.S. growth remains strong enough to encourage the Fed to raise the funds rate to 7 per cent or higher, a stronger dollar may result. For now, we maintain our 12-month forecasts of DM/USD 1.55 and JPY/USD 92, which assumes that Germany and Japan will hike official interest rates in the second half of 1995.

**Technical View:** The U.S. dollar was generally strong against most of the world's major currencies during the week ended Dec. 23. As a result, the dollar index posted its eighth gain in nine weeks. Nonetheless, the index has only managed to challenge — but not penetrate — resistance in the 89.00-91.00 area. Moreover, both sentiment and momentum can be described as being overbought, at least on a short term basis.

Thus, while medium term momentum is still constructive (indicating still higher rally highs in coming weeks) short term weakness, in the context of the still developing uptrend, appears indicated. A break below 89.00 would be a good sign that a correction is under way. Although benchmark support remains at 84.91, most of the nearby support exists in the 86.80-87.95 range.

#### Japanese yen

**Fundamental View:** The dollar continued to trade steady around the JPY/USD 100 level. The dollar has benefited in recent weeks from a combination of dollar purchases, mainly by the Bank of Japan. We continue to expect the dollar to trade as low as JPY/USD 92 over the next twelve months.

**Technical View:** The Japanese yen gained 0.1 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Dec. 23. Sentiment is oversold. While the currency has only marginally penetrated the trading range that has been in force since July, it has decisively moved below the post-February uptrend channel. Momentum is still weak, and appears to have the potential to have a downward bias into February.

If so, this would allow for an upcoming penetration of 100.80-101.80 Y/U.S.\$ support; such a move would set the stage for further weakness to 105-107. With the above in mind, resistance at 96-97 takes on added significance.

#### Deutschemark

**Fundamental View:** The dollar held steady against the Deutschemark trading around DM/USD 1.57. The Deutschemark has been strong on the European crosses, with the French franc and the Italian lira losing ground due to political uncertainties in the two countries. It looks increasingly clear that the dollar has bottomed against the Deutschemark, and the market has regained confidence in the Fed's fighting credentials. For most of this year, markets have regarded the Fed as being "behind the curve" on inflation and consequently investors preferred to hold marks rather than dollars. Market participants now seem more inclined to believe that the Fed is serious in its turn toward a more restrictive monetary policy.

Due to this sea-change in sentiment, we recently revised our outlook for the dollar-mark exchange rate from being negative on the dollar versus the mark to having a neutral stance. An important wild card for the dollar is whether or not the massive amounts of capital outflows that

#### Pound sterling

**Fundamental View:** In a short and quiet trading week, the pound held steady around USD/GBP 1.54 and DM/GBP 2.42. Following the 50 basis point hike in the base lending rate by the Bank of England in the first week of December, the British pound staged a modest rally, rising to USD/GBP 1.57 and DM/GBP 2.46.

U.K. fundamentals continue to look good: Underlying inflation — retail price inflation less mortgage interest payments — is currently only 2 per cent. The lowest level in 27 years. However, real GDP rose 4.2 per cent in the third quarter following a 4.1 per cent increase for the second quarter and growth for 1994 should average 3.7 per cent. With very little spare capacity left in the U.K., inflation is likely to begin picking up soon and we expect base rates over the next year to be increased by another 100 basis points. However, we also expect that the U.S. will continue to tighten monetary policy while Germany is expected to shift to a less accommodative stance by the middle of next year, German official rates — the Lombard and discount rates — are expected to remain unchanged during the first half of 1995 before possibly edging higher in the second half.

As we expect the short-term interest rate differential between Germany and the U.K. to widen, we look for the pound to appreciate against the mark to DM/GBP 2.50 in 12-month's time and we expect the pound to follow the mark higher against the dollar to our 12-month forecast of USD/GBP 1.61.

**Technical View:** The British pound lost 0.9 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Dec. 23, and was the weakest of the six major currencies we regularly discuss. Sentiment continues to improve and is near oversold levels. Momentum is weak and has the potential to remain so until February. Important nearby support exists down to 1.526 U.S.\$/L, and a break below that level would allow for a test of the January low at \$1.465. Resistance exists near \$1.58, then \$1.643.

Against the DM, sterling fell 0.5 per cent last week. Momentum appears to have expected to show a steady decline, and the federal deficit is decrease. Diverging inflation rates in the coming year and concerns over

monetary policy are likely to lead the S.F./DM to 0.86 in 12-month's time.

In line with our revised Deutschemark-dollar forecast that looks for further near-term dollar strength, we now expect the franc to weaken against the dollar in the next few months before recovering to trade near S.F./U.S.\$ 1.33.

#### Swiss franc

**Technical View:** The Swiss franc declined 0.2 per cent versus the greenback during the week ended Dec. 23. Sentiment is at its most oversold readings in over a year. Medium term momentum is weak, but the currency remains above its 1994 uptrend line: The DM cross fell 0.2 per cent last week. Medium term momentum has maintained its upward bias, and is approaching overbought levels. The rally in the cross, therefore, may be approaching its final stages. Although benchmark support exists at .827, a decline decisively through .844 would damage the uptrend. Resistance exists above .850.

#### Canadian dollar

**Fundamental View:** The Canadian dollar continued its slide against the U.S. dollar, dropping to C\$/U.S.\$ 1.40 level. Canada's economic fundamentals are sound, yet, they have failed to provide any respite to the C\$. Led primarily by exports, third-quarter real GDP growth registered an impressive 4.7 per cent rate following a robust 6.4 per cent rate for the second quarter. Canadian exports grew at a 20 per cent annualised rate in the third quarter. The strong export performance enabled the third quarter current account deficit to decrease to C\$5.1 billion from C\$7.5 billion in the earlier quarter.

As a share of GDP, this is the lowest level in over seven years. Personal consumption grew at a respectable 2.9 per cent. Unemployment was down in November from 10 per cent to 9.6 per cent. In September and October, the Bank of Canada followed an easy monetary policy with low short-term interest rates, given that the recovery in the consumer goods sector was more fragile than the recovery in the external sector.

The Bank of Canada limited upward pressure on short-term rates through maintaining a low overnight rate, below the U.S. Fed funds rate. With the U.S. now moving towards a restrictive monetary policy, interest rate differentials are moving in favour of the U.S., putting downward pressure again.

We expect that in the next year, rates will be increased by the Fed to 7 per cent, raising the cash rate to 10 per cent. This will also expect the curve to invert by the second half of next year.

The near-term, positive news for the AS is likely to come through indications that economic growth in the December quarter is likely to be strong. Also, the government's fiscal package — released second or third week in January — is expected to project surpluses in 1996 and 1997. However, current account data for November is slated to be released on Jan. 4 and that is likely to be negative for the AS. We expect the AS to be trading near U.S.\$/AS 0.80 in six-month's time before falling back to U.S.\$/AS 0.78 in 12-month's time.

## MEES: Israeli capital to be used in Egyptian project

NICOSIA (AFP) — Israel's Merhav Group has joined in a nearly \$1.5 billion project to build a refinery near Alexandria, Egypt, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported in its latest edition.

The refinery is part of a multi-billion dollar programme designed to mobilise both public and private capital over the next five years to expand Egypt's oil refining and petrochemical facilities, according to the Cyprus-based review.

Merhav along with Swiss and Egyptian private firms represent 80 per cent of the Israeli-registered Middle East Oil Refineries (MIDOR) venture to build a 100,000 barrel-per-day (b/d) refinery at Sidi Kurr, MEES said.

The remaining 20 per cent of the \$1.5 billion capitalised MIDOR belong to the state-owned Egyptian General Petroleum Company (EGPC), which will supply Egyptian crude to the refinery.

Merhav's head, Yossi Meiman, has said his group has already raised \$700 million for the project, out of which \$200 million will come from the United States, MEES reported.

Oil Minister Hamdi Al Banhi told MEES that Cairo has decided the five-year plan after "noticing that Europe and the East Mediterranean countries have not been building refining and petrochemical capacity for some time."

"We expect that there will be an opportunity to increase exports to the neighbouring regions in the coming years... we will also be needing more petroleum products in Egypt after year 2000," he added.

## Batayneh heads investment arm of huge Palestinian holding firm

By a Jordan Times staff reporter

AMMAN — The Palestine Investment and Development Company (PIDC), a huge holding company set up by Palestinian businessmen in the wake of the breakthrough in the Middle East peace process, enters 1995 with a new manager for its investment arm after setting up affiliate firms in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Safwan Batayneh, economic advisor at the Prime Ministry, assumed his new job on Dec. 18 after taking a one-year leave of absence from the prime ministry.

Dr. Batayneh, who served as vice-president of a major American investment firm and has extensive experience in the Wall Street, said the \$200 million capital company has already set up several projects in tourism, industry and housing in the West Bank and Gaza and was studying other projects.

"We are considering several projects and are also on the lookout for viable investments in all sectors of the Palestinian economy," Dr. Batayneh told the Jordan Times.

The firm, which is in fact a holding company, has already set up three affiliates in the West Bank to handle projects in tourism, industry and housing. Details of the projects already under implementation were not immediately available, but they are believed to involve tens of millions of dollars.

While commercial viability is indeed a prime consideration in determining investment, the company will also seek to support "initiatives launched by the Palestine

National Authority," Dr. Batayneh said. "After all, one of the company's prime objectives is to develop the Palestinian economy and hence we will be also involved in infrastructure projects in the West Bank and Gaza," he said.

The Palestine Investment and Development Company, a firm registered in Liberia, is the biggest Palestinian private sector venture and involves dozens of Palestinian businessmen based in Jordan, the Gulf states, Europe and the United States.

The establishment of the company was formally announced in mid-1994, shortly after Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir signed an agreement in May to implement to Sept. 13, 1993, declaration of principles on Palestinian autonomy.

While not all its founders need necessarily see eye-to-eye with the political programmes of Mr. Arafat, president of the PNA which runs autonomy in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho, the philosophy that prompted them to come together and launch the huge venture was a realisation that the private sector had to take up the initiative to develop the Palestinian economy, according to some of the shareholders of the firm.

"We do not believe in leaving everything to the political regime, hoping that it would do the job for us," said one shareholder earlier this year. "The private sector has to take up its own initiative and see it through while of course cooperating with the political forces."

## JORDAN MARKET PLACE

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### LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.4036/46	Canadian dollar
	1.5490/00	Deutschemarks
	1.7344/54	Dutch guilders
	1.3106/16	Swiss francs
	31.82/86	Belgian francs
	5.3410/60	French francs
	1623.0/4.0	Italian lire
	99.62/72	Japanese yen
	7.4325/25	Swedish crowns
	6.7620/70	Norwegian crowns
	6.0780/30	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.5632/42	
One ounce of gold	\$382.60/383.10	

## few issues of shares and stocks added up to D 438.1m

With a total of JD 40 million in new issues of shares and stocks during the first half of 1994, the overall amount at the primary market since the beginning of the year has reached 438.1 million. Observers say that most investments in new issues were by local investors contrary to the belief of many optimists that sign investments would be attracted to the Kingdom by the advent of peace. According to statistics from the Ministry of Industry and Trade, foreign investments in the past eleven months reached only JD 11.1 million in 76 companies, out of a total of JD 388.9 million of investments registered at the ministry by 30 companies. As such, sign investment accounted only 2.8 per cent of the total investment during the eleven months of this year (Al Aswaq).

The mid-year results of Arab Jordan Investment Bank show that deposits of its climbed to JD 178.1 million, a rise of JD 13.5 million over the mid-year results in 1993. Credits extended by the bank increased to JD 71.7 million to JD 89.2 million. Overall assets totalled JD 227.1 million compared to JD 217.1 million at mid-year in 1993 (Al Aswaq).

Total assets at the end of the 1994 (mid-year results) of Arab Jordan Investment Bank reached JD 385.7 million. Credits extended by the bank as a whole by JD 38.27 million, a rise of JD 173.09 million at the end of June. The bank resorted to other banks and financial institutions to finance a decrease in deposits by clients from JD 15.8 million to JD 299.5 million at mid-year. However, total deposits amounted to JD 329.4 million (Al Aswaq).

Branches in Jordan have opened 30 new branches this year in addition to 112 old ones. With 20 branches in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, banks have a total of 38 branches compared to 28 branches at the end of last year. Twenty more branches are expected to open in the Palestinian territories next year bringing the total to 40 branches for an investment of \$28 million (Al Aswaq).

The Department of Customs will be holding monthly meetings throughout next year to try to work out any difficulties or difficulties between the department and the economic sectors. The aim of such gatherings will be to take the form of a dialogue between customs officers and the private sector. The first meeting will be held at one of the hotels on Jan. 7 (Jusour).

Loans extended by the Jordan Petroleum Company during the first nine months of this year have reached JD 26.1 million, an increase over 112 borrowers and JD 22.8 million 10 borrowers during the period of last year (Al Aswaq).

The Jordan Petroleum Company has increased its gas production to 250 tonnes a day in addition to 250 tonnes a day. According to the secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, there is no intention to raise the price of a gas (Al Aswaq).

Industry and Trade Minister Khalaf said that finalising economic agreements between Jordan and Israel by mid-May, negotiations between the two countries started last year and covered industry, trade and money changes (Al Aswaq).



## Solo yachswoman battles rough seas in crippled vessel

### Fears still held as Australian frigate steams to rescue

SYDNEY (R) — Rescue authorities said on Friday they may lose track of French yachswoman Isabelle Autissier, adrift in huge sub-Antarctic seas, because her two emergency radio beacons will run out of power before she is due to be rescued Sunday.

Radio stations have been asked to broadcast a message to Autissier to turn off one of the beacons before they both run out of power, said Keith Hopper from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

"We really fear we may lose her if both beacons run out of power," Hopper told Reuters. Each beacon has 48 hours of power.

Radio France, Australia's state-owned broadcaster and some commercial stations in southern Australia have agreed to air the message in French and English.

Autissier, 38, had been heading for Sydney in the second leg of the BOC round the world solo challenge when she activated the emergency beacons at 5.45 p.m. (0300 GMT) on Wednesday.

Autissier's normal radio communications have been severely damaged. A survival kit, including a raft and radio, was dropped to her from an Australian Air Force Hercules plane on Thursday, but Autissier has not made radio contact.

"We just don't know why she hasn't used the radio," Hopper said, adding Autissier may have decided to try to get some sleep after battling the wild seas for the past 24 hours.

"We hope she will at least tune the radio into a commercial station and hear our message," he added.

The Hercules found Autissier's dismasted yacht, the *Ecureuil Pointou* Charentais 2, being pitched wildly in 50-knot winds and gigantic seas about 900 nautical miles south of Tasmania. Briefed radio message to the Hercules, Autissier said there was "something else wrong" besides the broken mast, said one of her shore crew who was aboard the plane.

Serge Virend said what ever else is wrong with her boat must be serious or else she would have erected a jury rig with the portion of the main mast still on deck.

"She would not have used the distress call she had lost contact down there," Virend told Reuters on Friday. "I think it must be her steering. She may have lost her rudder."

Autissier was forced to erect a jury rig when she was dismasted early in the Cape Town-to-Sydney leg of the race. That time she managed to make her way to the French Kerguelen Islands in the southern Indian Ocean and installed a makeshift mast.

Virend dismissed earlier media reports that Autissier's boat had filled with water and risked sinking, saying the hull looked sound and the yacht normally would not be in the water.

"What has probably happened is that a big wave was rolled her and broken the mast and destroyed all her electronics," he said.

Virend said Autissier was working on deck and waved to him when she saw him. She looked well, but mental fatigue would be a danger now.

"She must be really tired. She is really tough and really intelligent, but mental fatigue will start," he said.

The only death in the BOC race occurred in 1986-87 when French yachtsman Jacques Deroche fell overboard in calm seas off the east Australian coast after battling huge southern oceanic swells. Mental fatigue was blamed.

Conditions have eased slightly, but a new cold front is due to hit her Saturday. "Any front down there in the roaring forties is pretty rough," said Hopper.

Autissier first sailed around the world solo in the last BOC challenge in 1990-91 and earlier this year set the record for the flying cloud yacht race from New York to San Francisco around Cape Horn.

Autissier's boat was damaged in a collision with a small boat in the English Channel in 1988. She was rescued by a British Royal Navy ship and taken to hospital. She was then taken to a hospital in Wafangdian City, Liaoning, China, where she died on December 16, to his spouse, Dalian when his Mercedes Benz struck a head and had to have stitches, but he was seriously hurt, the newspaper said.

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### China supercoach injured in car crash

BEIJING (R) — China's supercoach Ma Junliang's wife was hurt in a car crash in northeast China on Friday. His life is in no danger, a hospital official said Friday. "His life is in no danger," the official said by telephone from Nanchang. Ma was taken to hospital in Wafangdian City, Liaoning, China, where he died on December 16, to his spouse, Dalian when his Mercedes Benz struck a head and had to have stitches, but he was seriously hurt, the newspaper said.

### PAOK beat Red Star in Belgrade tournament

BELGRADE (R) — Leading Greek club PAOK Salonika beat Red Star of Belgrade 50-48 in the first match of a special tournament marked the first international Yugoslav team since U.N. sanctions against the country were relaxed almost three months ago. The match was part of a four-day event Limoges of France beat Belgrade 78-77 (43-34). Both teams are former Champions. Partizan won the title in 1992 and 1993.

### Sanders earns NFL defensive honours

NEW YORK (AFP) — Two-sport star Deion Sanders, the San Francisco 49ers has been voted National Football League defensive player of the year by sportswriters nationwide. Sanders, who joined San Francisco in 1993, was named defensive player of the year after the players' strike ended in September. He played for the Atlanta Braves in Major League Baseball season, easily beat out San Francisco's Woodson and linebacker Greg Lloyd, both of whom were in the balloting. "It's a wonderful achievement," Sanders said. "Not for myself, but I think for (defensive coordinator) Rhodes, because he has been responsible for my development on my abilities, letting me play the way I'm playing. The way I'm being used. He put me in the right situation. Sanders had played all five of his previous NFL seasons with the Falcons in Atlanta, where he also played with the Braves baseball team.

### Aintree hero Red Rum set for century

LONDON (R) — Triple Grand National winner Red Rum is 30 on New Year's Day — equivalent to around 100 human years. Red Rum won the Grand National in 1974 and 1977 and finished runner-up in 1975 and 1976. Racers rarely live to 30, but apart from one serious illness three years ago when he suffered a blacked artery, Red Rum has enjoyed good health. One devoted to him, but on the idea of sending a gift-boxed single red rose to the horse's stable.

### Goalkeeper scores with header

LISBON (R) — Belgian goalkeeper Guy Hubert saved Portugal's soccer team Estrela de Amadora from a 1-0 defeat by Chaves Thursday night when he left his net in a late equaliser. Estrela de Amadora were down in their first division game when Hubert moved upfield and headed home from a corner, giving his team a 1-1 draw. It was the first goal scored by a keeper in the Portuguese Championship this season.

### Spurs ship Dumitrescu out to Sevilla

LONDON (AFP) — Tottenham's Romanian World Cup star the Dumitrescu is on his way to Spain and will open the rest of the season on loan to Sevilla after Spurs chairman Alan Sugar did an about-turn to sanction the deal. Spurs originally insisted on a straightforward sale, wanting all their money back on the forward for whom former manager Ossie Ardiles paid 2.6 million pounds less than six months ago. Sugar at first turned down the Spanish club's offer to take him on loan, but has now relented, given Sevilla the option to make the move permanent at the end of the campaign. Dumitrescu scored five goals in 11 games in Ardiles's flamboyant attacking regime, but was the first victim of new manager Gerry Francis's more defensive White Hart Lane and asked to go on the transfer list during this month.

### Famed Yankees pitcher Allie Reynolds dies

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. (R) — Allie Reynolds, who pitched for six World Series championship teams with the New York Yankees has died. Reynolds, who had been undergoing treatment for cancer, was 79. Reynolds, a hard-throwing right-hander who was known as "Supercub" because of his American Indian ancestry, and his blazing fastball, compiled a 182-107 record with a 3.4 earned run average in 13 Major League seasons. He started his career in 1942 with the Cleveland Indians and after seasons joined the Yankees in 1947, where he pitched until retirement after the 1954 season.

### Sharpe to miss playoffs with neck injury

GREEN BAY (AFP) — Green Bay's star receiver Steve Sharpe will miss the playoffs with a neck injury, Green Bay Packers confirmed Friday. Sharpe will be missed by the Packers when they host Detroit in the first round of the National Football League playoffs Saturday. He caught 94 passes in the regular season for a total of 1,119 yards and 18 touchdowns. Packers doctor Patrick McKenzie said the injury involves looseness in Sharpe's two vertebrae. He said it was too soon to know if Sharpe's career was threatened. Sharpe was injured on December 12 against Atlanta when he hit his head on an opponent while blocking. He experienced tingling in his limbs and was on the second half.

### Tasmania wins Sydney-Hobart yacht race

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian maxi yacht Tasmania won a tight finish to the 630 nautical mile Sydney-to-Hobart yacht race Thursday, arriving in Hobart shortly before 5.50 a.m. (1850 GMT). Close behind her was fellow Australian maxi Brindabella, about half a nautical mile astern and racing to the line in the island state of Tasmania's capital at about eight knots. The 25.7 metre Tasmania, formerly the New Zealand Endeavour, which took line honours in the race, Hobart in 1992, led a record-sized starting fleet of 11 vessels for most of the 50th anniversary event. Skippered by owner Robert Clifford of the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, she was first into the heavily ocean swell off Sydney harbour after a crowded and chaotic start at 1 p.m. (0200 GMT) Monday. Tasmania had been on course to beat Kialoa's 1975 race record time of two days, 14 hours, 36 minutes and 56 seconds but she encountered adverse weather Wednesday that souped her chances.

## Athens prepares Europe's largest basketball stadium

ATHENS (R) — A 20,000-seat Athens stadium, scheduled to host next June's European nations basketball championship for men, is far from ready and officials expressed concern Friday whether it would be completed on time.

"The stadium's seats, the electronic scoreboards, the wooden floor, and the warm-up courts are still to be completed," an official involved in the works told Reuters.

"There's a lot of work to be done, there have been delays and we must start immediately so that everything is ready on time," he said.

The court, next to the Athens Olympic Stadium, is nicknamed the Temple of Basketball and will be Europe's largest when finished.

It was originally scheduled to open last October

and Athens club panathinaikos would have used it as its home court.

"We are losing big money waiting for the stadium to be completed," said Panathinaikos president Pavlos Yannakopoulos, who has spent \$22 million in the past three years to buy some of the most expensive players in Europe.

"Now we cram our fans into a 3,000-seat stadium in both Greek and European matches and this is a pity since we could have sold an average 9,000 tickets a game if we had the space," he said.

Sports ministry officials said the stadium was now due to be completed by April and that they expected record profits from the two-week tournament with tickets going for an average \$40 each.



Roberto Baggio

## Juventus want Baggio but not at any cost

SESTRIERE, Italy (R) — Italian club Juventus said they wanted to keep World Cup star Roberto Baggio but were unwilling to break the bank to do so.

Baggio's contract with Juventus expires at the end of the season and speculation has been rife that the striker could join a foreign club willing to stump up in excess of \$30 million to buy the player and pay his contract for three years.

"We want to keep Baggio," Antonio Grando, managing director of the Turin team, told ANSA News Agency in an interview from this Italian Alpine resort.

"But obviously we will not be able to compete with a Japanese club that eventually offered Roberto Baggio a \$30 million deal," he added.

Baggio, 27, has been hampered by injury this season but veteran striker Gianluca Vialli and rising star Alessandro Del Piero have more than made up for his absence.

The Turin team trail leader Parma by one point with a game in hand midway through the Serie A season.

Baggio, 1993 European player of the year, is due to return in a key match against Parma when action resumes on January 8.

## 'Eintracht used four foreigners in UEFA tie'

NAPLES (R) — Napoli have asked UEFA to examine the possibility that Eintracht Frankfurt used a fourth foreign player when the two teams met in a UEFA Cup match last month.

Eintracht won the third round tie 2-0 on aggregate.

Gioseppe Iodice, secretary-general of the Italian club, and the German team's vice president, Klaus Krieger, had asked UEFA to look into the matter at Napoli's request and were awaiting a reply.

In October European soccer's governing body overturned the results of a UEFA Cup first leg match won 3-2 by CSKA Sofia against Juventus because the Bulgarian club had fielded a player who had not been registered with UEFA by the official deadline.

"There could be several solutions to this — repeat of the game, disqualification of the team — but, whatever the case, UEFA will have to clear this up," Iodice said.

"Komitchev lost his suspended status once he played for Yugoslavia against Brazil and Argentina," Iodice said. "He cannot take part in national games and be considered assimilated."

Komitchev played alongside Fole Jan, Patrick, Ghanaian Anthony Yobash and Nigerian Jay Jay Okocha when Eintracht beat Napoli 1-0 in the first leg.

Eintracht beat Napoli 1-0 again earlier this month to reach the quarter-finals.

Under UEFA rules, clubs are allowed three foreign players and two assimilated ones.

"Komitchev lost his suspended status once he played for Yugoslavia against Brazil and Argentina," Iodice said.

## NBA ROUNDUP

WASHINGTON (AFP) — National Basketball Association results and standings after Thursday's games.

Miami 26, L.A. Clippers 83  
Atlanta 127, San Antonio 121, OT  
Charlotte 125, Orlando 123  
Houston 124, Golden State 124  
Portland 104, Denver 93  
L.A. Lakers 94, Seattle 95

### Eastern Conference Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Orlando	21	6	.776	—
New York	14	12	.538	7
New Jersey	12	18	.400	11
Philadelphia	10	17	.370	11½
Washington	7	17	.292	12
Boston	7	18	.286	13½

### Central Division

Cleveland	19	8	.704	—
Indiana	16	9	.640	2
Charlotte	15	12	.556	4
Chicago	14	13	.519	5
Atlanta	12	16	.429	7½
Detroit	9	16	.360	9
Milwaukee	9	17	.346	9½

### Western Conference Midwest Division

Utah	19	8	.704	—
Houston	17	9	.654	1½
San Antonio	14	10	.583	3½
Denver	13	13	.500	5½
Dallas	12	12	.500	5½
Minnesota	6	19	.240	12

### Pacific Division

Phoenix	21	6	.776	—
Seattle	18	9	.667	3
Los Angeles	16	9	.640	4
San Francisco	14	12	.538	6½
Portland	13	12	.520	7
Golden State	10	16	.385	10½
L.A. Clippers	4	24	.143	17½

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### IGNORE THE ADAGE

Both vulnerable, West deals NORTH ♠ 9 8 4 A K 7 4 ♣ K 3 ♦ Q J 3 ♠ K 2 ♣ Q J 10 7 ♠ 8 3 ♣ Q 9 8 5 4 ♠ A 10 6 4 ♠ K 9 5 2 SOUTH ♠ A 6 3 ♣ Q J 10 9 5 ♠ A 7 6 ♠ 8 7

The bidding: West North East South Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Five of ♠

Many players love to quote bridge maxims, since they are cute and quite often correct. But if you follow them slavishly instead of using these little gray cells, you are headed for many expensive errors.

South's hand is borderline for a jump to game once hearts have been raised. We would have preferred a game try. Had that been two spades.

North would have rejected three diamonds, however, who 2 have received a gleeful acceptance.

West led a low diamond, taken by dummy's king. Declarer drove trumps in two rounds, ending in hand, and led a club. West followed low and the jack, lost to the king. Declarer ducked the spade shift, but won the continuation. Another club lost to the ace and, since the communication between the defenders' hands was severed, declarer was able to win the diamond return, ruff a diamond and discard a spade on the queen of clubs.

The result looks normal enough, but in the cold light of day it is obvious the defenders could have won the day had West ignored the adage: "Second hand low."

When declarer first led a low club toward dummy's holding, West should have shot up with the ace and shifted to the king of trumps. No matter what declarer does East will be able to win the second club and cash whatever spade trumps are still there for the taking. Violating a heavy adage will not let the defenders two tricks to each black suit for down one.

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Presents: A world famed movie picture worth watching: <b>THE FLINTSTONES</b>	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	<b>The Lion King</b> for children only Roddy Piper in Billy Blanks in <b>Back in Action</b> Shows: 8:30, 10:30	<b>CONCORD '1'</b> Sylvester Stallone/ Sharon Stone <b>THE SPECIALIST</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 <b>CONCORD '2'</b> <b>CRUSH</b> Shows: 3:15, 5:15	Will soon present: <b>Mousa Hijazi (SUM'AA)</b> in the satirical political comedy: <b>Hi Citizen</b>	Presents <b>Abu Awwad</b> in the social comedy <b>Punctured Bag</b> The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: <b>The political satire: Al Salam Ya Salam</b> Daily at 8:30 Saturday & Sunday is the theatre's holiday. In English Sunday January 15, 1995		



## China pull out of swimming World Cup

**BELING (R)** — China have decided against competing in next week's opening World Cup swimming event in Hong Kong but an official said Friday the decision was not related to doping scandal surrounding the team.

"We planned to take part but the athletes were too tired after the Asian Games just eight weeks ago," Yuan Jiewei, vice-president of the Chinese Swimming Federation, said.

Beijing itself has already been dropped as a venue in the World Cup series because the meet organisers in the Chinese capital failed to confirm they would go ahead with it.

Yuan said China's swimmers had had insufficient time to recover since October's Asian Games in Hiroshima, Japan, and participation in Hong Kong would have disrupted training schedules at the start of a busy year.

He said the decision not to compete had nothing to do with revelations of drug abuse at the Hiroshima Games. Seven swimmers were among 11 Chinese competitors banned after testing positive for the banned anabolic steroid dehydrotestosterone.

All 11 athletes were stripped of their Asian Games medals by the Olympic Committee of Asia.

The swimmers, who included women's world champions Yang Aihua and Lu Bin, were suspended for two years.

China has vowed to take steps to curb doping which it maintains is an isolated problem and not officially sanctioned or organised, as alleged by some trainers and athletes abroad.

Chinese swimmers have taken part in the World Cup series in the past but Yuan said the event produced little benefit in return for the disruption to training.

"The only benefit is that they have some experience in how to compete," he said.

Yuan said another reason for missing the Hong Kong meeting was that entry formalities for travel there were extremely complicated.

In Hong Kong, one of the organisers said he doubted visa difficulty was a factor since special arrangements to pick up visas on entry into the territory could have been made.

"At present... it may be embarrassing for them to send swimmers," Ronnie Wong, a member of the Hong Kong organising committee, said.

"I think there are other problems hindering their coming, maybe finances."

The Hong Kong event next Tuesday and Wednesday is the first of seven in the World Cup series of short-course (25-metre pool) meetings. The six others will be held in European venues between January 31 and February 19.

Germany's Franziska Van Almsick, world 200 metres freestyle champion, leads an entry of 74 swimmers from 16 countries and territories in Hong Kong.

Van Almsick set a 200 metres freestyle world short-course record at the Beijing World Cup meet two years ago and Wong hopes she will break the mark in Hong Kong.



Bernard Tapie

## Tapie to stand trial

**LILLE, France (R)** — The legal troubles of bankrupt French businessman and ex-soccer boss Bernard Tapie worsened when a judge ordered him to stand trial in March on charges he rigged a soccer match, judicial sources said.

Judge Bernard Baffie said Tapie, ex-president of Olympique Marseille, would stand trial in the north French city of Valenciennes from March 13 to 21 charged with active corruption, a stiffer charge than the original one of complicity.

Tapie, a former cabinet minister in a Socialist-led government who was declared bankrupt two weeks ago, is suspected of a role in bribing league opponents Valenciennes to lose a key match in May 1993.

He will also be tried for allegedly influencing witnesses in the match-rigging scandal. Each of the charges carries jail terms of between one and three years.

Tapie denies any wrongdoing, also rejected charges that he illegally ran up massive debts in running his crumbling business empire.

A few days after the disputed match, which Marseille won 1-0, the club reached the peak of its success under Tapie's eight-year leadership by winning the European Cup.

Two weeks ago, Tapie stepped down as president of the club after soccer authorities banned him.

Five others implicated in the case will also stand trial in March, including former Olympique manager Jean-Pierre Bernes who also has been accused of active corruption.

Valenciennes players Christophe Robert and Jorge Burruchaga Christy will be charged with receiving bribes and Marseille player Jean-Jacques Eydelite will be charged with complicity along with Robert's wife, Marie-Christine Robert.

## Jordan Handball Championship

### Ahli maintain lead; Orthodoxi drop to 2nd division

By Roufan Nahhas  
Special to the Jordan Times

**AMMAN** — Titleholders Al Ahli ended their match by crushing Amman 40/18 Thursday in the 11th week of the Kingdom's Handball Championship.

Al Ahli/Amman 40/18: Al Ahli crushed Amman at the Sport Palace in an exciting match that gave Al Ahli another two-points to take the lead with 22 points in the overall standings.

Al Ahli experience and Amman's weak defence gave Al Ahli's Nabil Jamil, Iyad Abed Hameed and the wingers Mousa Abdallah and his brother Issa the chance to score and move freely, confusing Amman's defence who looked weak and unorganised to end the first half with 23/9 lead.

In the second half Al Ahli kept the pressure taking advantage of the unstable performance of Amman's players who tried to attack but in vain as the

match ended 40/18 for Al Ahli.

**Al Salt/Yarmouk Shouneh 33/29:** Meanwhile in another match Al Salt beat Yarmouk Shouneh in an exciting match from both sides.

**Al Salt's Mohammad Hindawi and Imad Tadrous** led the attacks successfully in spite of a lot of pressure from Y. Shouneh who looked determined to win. The first half ended in a tie 15/15.

In the second half Al Salt concentrated on quick attacks to leave Y. Shouneh trailing as they won the match 33/29.

**Hussein/Orthodoxi 37-31:** In another match Al Hussein pushed Orthodoxi to the second division after losing 10 matches.

Al Hussein's strong defence was enough to leave Al Orthodoxi in a dilemma, as Al Hussein scored an important 37-31 victory to remain fourth.

### Standings

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Ahli	12	11	—	1	420	276	22
Arabi	10	9	—	1	302	258	18
Salt	11	6	—	5	323	324	12
Hussein	11	4	1	6	289	314	9
Y. Shouneh	11	3	1	7	326	364	7
Amman	10	3	—	7	237	290	6
Orthodoxi	11	1	—	10	292	373	2

★ Amman-Arabi have a postponed match.

## Newcastle's Keegan hopes to slip back into top gear

**LONDON (R)** — Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan is looking to Andy Cole and Paul Kitson to get their act together and help recapture his side's old zest at Norwich Saturday.

The St. James' Park team started the season with six straight wins and 29 points from their first 11 matches of the English Premier League campaign.

But the last nine have brought just 10 points as Keegan's side, who have slipped out of Europe and the English League Cup, have dropped to fourth in the table.

Cole has failed to score in six games — his worst-ever spell for Newcastle — while Kitson has not featured on the score-sheet since November 19.

Keegan, once more without Peter Beardsley, has admitted the pairing has not worked as he had anticipated.

"Andy and Paul are trying to work out a new partnership. It hasn't lived up to my expectations so far but I feel they've got the ability to be a good pair," said the manager.

"They're not sure where they're going to run or what the other is thinking, but it would surprise you if they did."

"It's wrong to throw two players together and say 'there you go, you cost around two million pounds each and you should be able to play together.'"

"I think there's more to football than that but they're working hard and will get it right."

Keegan added: "If we can get three points at Norwich we'll be right back in it. We've got 21 games left after Saturday — we're not even halfway yet."

"But after Norwich we've got 12 games at home and nine away and I'd keep us in the back of your minds when you're talking about the championship."

Leaders Blackburn travel to London, seeking to extend Crystal Palace's miserable goalless run to eight league games.

One player hoping to end his own goalless spell is expensive striker Chris Sutton, who has failed to net for four matches. Palace are without

hamstring victim John Salako.

Paul Ince is again absent for champions Manchester United as they bid to make up for their midweek slip-up against Leicester at Southampton and maintain the pressure on Blackburn.

Liverpool, up to third after scoring six points out of six over Christmas, face a testing trip to Leeds.

The Elland Road side are still without Brian Deane, Howells suspension would have been completed had Wednesday's game at Blackburn not been postponed.

The call-off, however, did give Gary Speed and David Wetherall additional time to recover from the injuries they sustained against Newcastle.

Tottenham manager Gerry Francis faces an anxious wait to see if Nick Barmby and David Whose will be fit for the trip to Coventry.

Nottingham Forest need to add to West Ham's discomfort at Upton Park if they are to stay in the title race.

The Hammers should have John Moncur back, but Don Hutchison and Martin Allen are still injured.



Switzerland's Vreni Schneider on her way to her slalom win.

## Slovenia's Hrovat ends Schneider's run

**MERIBEL, France (R)** — Slovenia's Urška Hrovat ended Vreni Schneider's run of success when she won the third slalom of the women's Alpine Skiing World Cup in Meribel Friday.

The 20-year-old Hrovat, whose only previous World Cup success was on home snow in Maribor last season, had a near-perfect second run and won in a combined time of one minute 20.15 seconds.

Schneider, the World Cup holder, had to be content with second place 0.09 seconds behind. She also lost

her unbeaten record in slaloms this season.

The 30-year-old Olympic champion would have taken the overall World Cup lead with a one-point advantage over compatriot Heidi Zeller if she had won.

"I never thought I could ski so well as I did today because of the rain," said Hrovat.

"I had problems at the start of the season because I had new skis but I'm improving with every race," she added.

The most gifted of the

young and impressive Slovenian team, she said it was a special pleasure to beat Schneider, who had won the last six slaloms she had entered.

"It gives me extra motivation because she is in such good shape at the moment. I hope there will be more victories like this one next year," she said.

France's Leila Piccard, the sister of former super-giant Olympic champion Franck, shone on home snow, taking third place in 1:20.74, her best result in a slalom.

More of a giant-slalom specialist, she had only made it to the podium once before, in a giant in Cortina last year.

Australia's Anita Wachter, back in form after a lacklustre start to the season, was fourth on 1:20.78.

There were more bad news for Schneider as Germany's Katja Seizinger, the world's leading downhill specialist, showed she would also be able to score vital points in slaloms this season. She took eighth place in 1:22.19, her best result by far in a technical event.

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## French pilot feared double hijacking

PARIS (Agencies) — A French pilot said on Friday he made an emergency take-off from Algiers airport at Christmas, fearing militants were planning to hijack his airliner along with an Air France jet just seized at the same airport.

The pilot for French domestic airline Air Inter told France-Info radio that the control tower had not warned him of the hijacking, even though he landed 30 minutes after the Air France Airbus A300 had been seized by hijackers.

The pilot, who did not give his name, said his plane, also an Airbus A300, landed on Saturday a half-hour behind schedule. Had he landed on time, he said, his plane could have been seized instead.

"If there were more of them, (the hijackers) could have split up and taken both planes," he added. "It could have ended up very badly."

The hijackers of the Air France jet shot dead three passengers before flying to Marseille where French commandos stormed the plane on Monday to end the 54-hour drama, killing all four guerrillas and freeing the 169 people on board.

As soon as the Air Inter plane came to a halt, Air France security staff boarded and told the pilot of the hostage-taking.

"The control tower never told us anything. If they had told us five or ten minutes earlier, I was just beginning my descent and I could have turned around immediately."

He said he disembarked his passengers and then took off immediately for the southern French city of Marseille, right across the Mediterranean, without refuelling or unloading the luggage on board.

Air Inter flight IT4210 left Marseille Saturday at 10:20 a.m. (0920 GMT) and landed in Algiers at 11:45 a.m. — 25 minutes behind its scheduled time of 11:20 a.m.

The hijacking of the Air France A-300 jet, with more than 200 passengers and crew on board, began at 11:18 a.m., according to Air France.

The revelations are bound to fuel doubts raised by French authorities about security at Algiers airport.

Earlier Air Inter confirmed

a report in the daily Le Figaro that the Air Inter plane took off without taking on new passengers or unloading the luggage of passengers who had just arrived.

But the airline did not know the exact reasons for the pilot's decision to make an emergency departure. "We are waiting for a security report," said a spokesman.

Le Figaro said Friday Algerian hardliners had planned to commandeer the Air Inter jetliner in addition to the Airbus-300 which they later hijacked to France.

Air Inter said the plane was only on the ground for 15 minutes. "The Air Inter plane was not threatened at any time," it said in a statement.

The airline said an Air France mechanic who had been about to board the hijacked jet learned of the danger and instead got on the Air Inter plane just before the doors closed.

The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most violent of Algerian fundamentalist groups, claimed responsibility for the hijacking.

France has been shocked by the ease with which the hijackers, loaded down with guns, grenades and sticks of dynamite, were able to walk on the plane under the nose of airport security just an hour's flying time from France.

Meanwhile, the crews of two French gas tankers bound for Algeria refused to dock on Thursday because they feared for their safety and turned their vessels back to France.

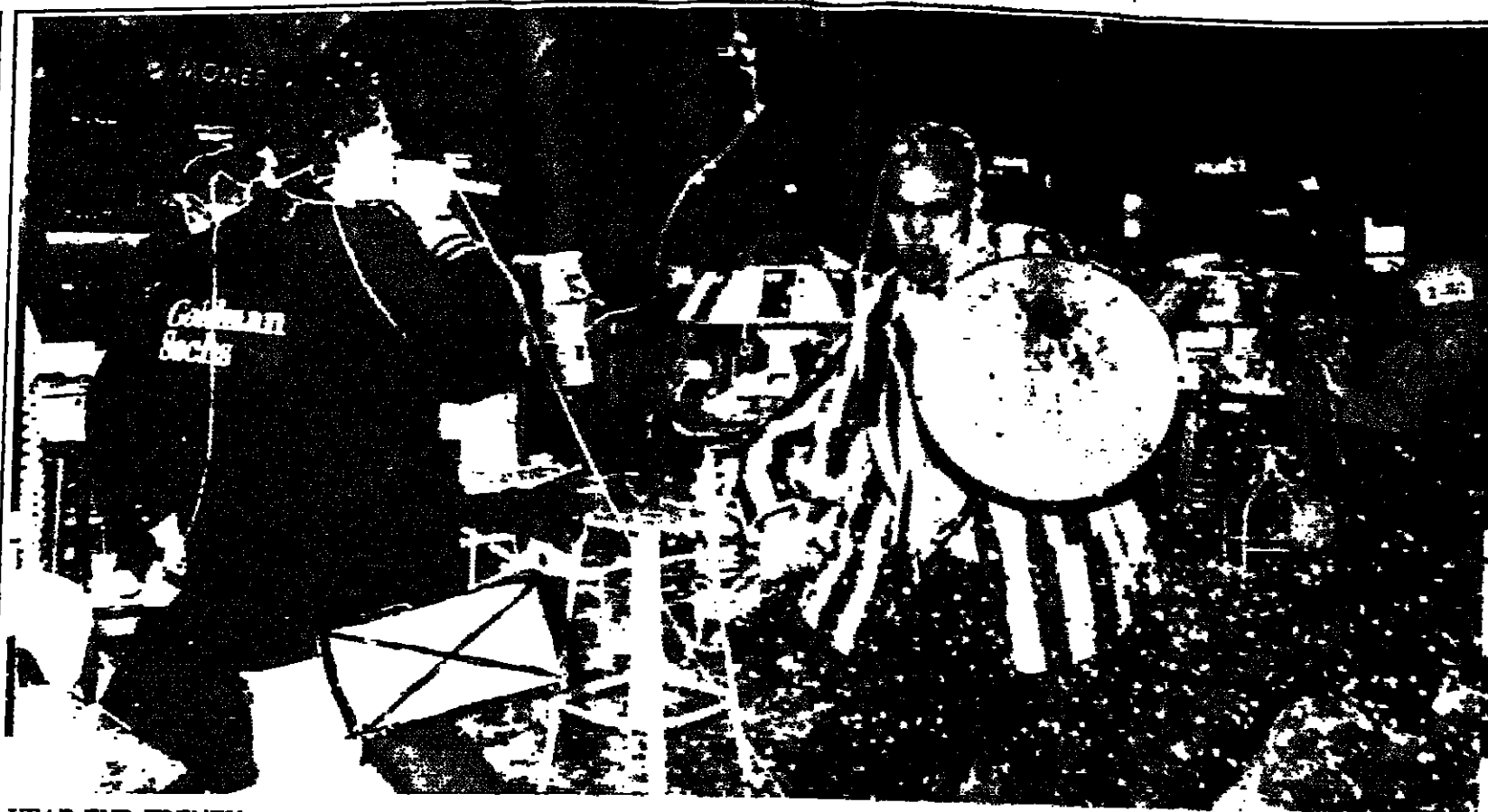
The communist-led CGT, the largest French labour union, said all freight shipments to Algeria should be suspended until Jan. 4 to allow better security measures to be set up.

Since the Christmas hijack, all French commercial airlines and ships have been banned from carrying passengers to Algeria.

Also on Thursday, investigators identified one of the hijackers as Mokheles Be Guettat, 25, from El Arach in Algeria.

The three other bodies had yet to be formally identified

(Continued on page 3)



YEAR-END FRENZY: Traders on the Paris stock exchange celebrate on Friday the last trading day of the year, despite a 1% per cent overall annual drop (AFP photo)

## Settlers wreck Palestinian-owned gas station

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Jewish settlers said on Friday they destroyed the foundation of a Palestinian-owned petrol station under construction in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, in an effort to bar Palestinians from building there.

David Alhayan, a settlement leader in the West Bank's Jordan rift region, said the site was under settler jurisdiction, and Arab construction would not be allowed there.

But the army said the construction was legal.

"Some people decided to take action and yesterday late at night residents of the valley went out to the area along with heavy vehicles and wrecked the foundation of the gas station," Mr. Alhayan said in a radio broadcast.

A Reuters camera crew on Friday filmed armed settlers directing a bulldozer that was uprooting the foundation. The settlers covered their faces to prevent identification.

The action coincided with Arab landowners' attempts to keep settlers from expanding a Jewish settlement near Bethlehem, a project that has threatened to bar Israeli-Palestinian Economic Organisation (E.O.) from the area.

The army's civil administration in the occupied West Bank, said the Palestinian owner of the petrol station site, Yusef Hana, had full approval to build the station on the plot near the Jewish settlement of Meholah.

"The gas station has all the necessary permits for construction at the location," said Elise Shazar, civil administration spokeswoman for the West Bank.

It was the second conflict over construction between Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank this week. Settlers and Israeli peace activists demonstrated that week at a hilltop near Bethlehem, where construction has begun on hundreds of new housing units for Jewish settlers. The project was

approved by the previous hardline Likud government. Yasser Arafat's Palestinian authority says the construction threatens Israel-PLO peace talks.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has asked the attorney general to examine legal ways to stop the building, but while the examination is conducted construction continues.

Israeli peace activists vowed to rally at the site on Friday despite an army order outlawing demonstrations.

## Rafsanjani denies clerical power feud

TEHRAN (R) — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Friday denied that there was a power struggle among Iran's senior Shiite Muslim Ayatollahs.

In a mass prayer sermon, he dismissed as the "worst kind of injustice" reports that Iran's supreme political leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was making a push for becoming a "marja taqlid" (source of emulation), the top Shiite clerical rank.

Many Iranian newspapers and influential clergymen have been promoting Ayatollah Khamenei as a new marja to fill the gap at the top of the Shiite clerical hierarchy since centennial Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Araki died a month ago.

Some officials and clerics said outsiders like Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, dismissed by the late leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as his designated successor in 1989, should not be allowed to become a marja.

A newspaper this week reported demonstrations against Ayatollah Montazeri in front of his home.

Mr. Rafsanjani, speaking publicly for the first time in the current debate, said Ayatollah Khamenei, whom he has known for 40 years, was unambiguous and it took a lot of persuasion to make him accept the posts he held since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

"When Ayatollah Araki's illness became serious, we talked to Mr. Khamenei about becoming a marja because he did not want to accept the burden," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

"Now to distort facts and say that (Khamenei) pushed to become a marja or that there was a power struggle or that he felt superior is the worst kind of injustice."

Ayatollah Khamenei said two weeks ago that he would act as a marja for Shiites living outside Iran, but would prefer other qualified Ayatollahs to offer spiritual guidance to Iranian Shiites so that he could have time to attend to affairs.

Mr. Rafsanjani said in any case Ayatollah Khamenei's position as Iran's supreme political leader was much more important than that of a marja.

Under Iran's constitution, the supreme leader is the top state authority and has nearly unlimited policy-setting powers.

The marjas derive their influence from the allegiance and number of their followers who pay them religious taxes.



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (right) listens as Saudi King Fahd (center) talks to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Alexandria on Thursday (AFP photo)

## Syria hails Arab mini-summit

(Continued from page 1)

The summit talks came just two days after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin travelled to Oman, becoming the first Israeli head of government to visit a Gulf Arab state.

Syria has long opposed one-to-one deals between Israel and Arab countries and insists that only a global settlement can lead to a comprehensive peace.

"Syria failed in its aim to impose a joint Arab decision on the Gulf countries," said the daily Haaretz.

And the Maariv daily said the summit had not achieved the aim of slowing down "the Arab World's reconciliation" with the Jewish state.

"But we will have to wait to see if the public and secret decisions taken in Alexandria will dissuade Gulf countries from their rapprochement with us in the coming weeks," the paper added.

A Saudi official said after the summit that Riyadh had agreed to help slow the pace of Arab normalisation with Israel, as long as there was no progress in Syria's peace talks with the Jewish state.

Talks between Israel and Syria have made no tangible progress since they were launched at the Madrid peace conference in October 1991.

They are deadlocked over the scope and timetable of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

In their summit statement, President Mubarak, President Assad and King Fahd also called on Iraq to implement U.N. resolutions for the sake of its people and Arab security.

In a statement given to reporters at the end of the summit, the three leaders said they wanted to achieve comprehensive peace in the region and had exerted sincere efforts to remove obstacles in the way of peace.

"The leaders stressed this peace must be based on U.N. resolutions 242, 338, 425 and the principle of land for peace."

"In this regard, the leaders highly appreciate Syria's position and its serious efforts to make the peace process a success. They (leaders) stressed their firm support for Syria's just demands."

The support comes at a time when diplomats say Syria fears it is becoming increasingly isolated as Arabs break ranks to either sign separate peace deals or forge ties with Israel.

Syria, which has demanded a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, ended its latest round of peace talks last week saying no progress had been achieved.

Damascus has spoken out against the peace agreements between Jordan and the Palestinians struck with Israel.

It has also publicly criticised a decision earlier this year by the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council — of which Saudi Arabia is the most powerful member — to lift a 46-year-old economic boycott on firms that deal with Israel.

Mr. Assad and King Fahd arrived unexpectedly in Alexandria on Wednesday and held lengthy discussions with Mr. Mubarak on Wednesday and a brief meeting on Thursday.

The leaders urged the world community to work to remove obstacles that they said Israel placed in the path of the peace process and stressed their demands for regional arms control.

"In this regard the three leaders renewed their requests for the setting up of a region free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, particularly nuclear weapons," they said.

Egypt, which became in 1979 the first Arab state to sign a peace treaty with Israel, has urged Arab states not to sign an extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty unless Israel signed.

Cairo has repeatedly urged Israel, which is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons, to sign the treaty but Israel has said it would

not do so as long as it faced a potential nuclear threat from other enemies such as Syria, Iraq and Iran.

The heads of state called on Iraq to fully comply with U.N. resolutions in order to alleviate its people's suffering and to boost security in the Arab World.

"The three leaders called on Iraq to complete the step it took by recognising the independence of Kuwait and its borders by fully complying with all Security Council resolutions in this regard."

"This would help end the suffering of the brotherly Iraqi people and create the appropriate atmosphere for boosting security and stability in the Arab World," they said.

The three leaders expressed their resolve to strengthen the 22-nation Arab League and its institutions to maintain its position as the "mother Arab organisation in which Arabs work to fulfill their aims."

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters Friday that "the summit was a big step in crystallising a joint Arab position, the results of which will become known during the next stage."

He said it would lead to "reaffirming the Arab League."

One official close to the meeting said Thursday that the session could be the first step towards a summit of all Arab leaders. It would be the first such meeting since the Gulf war.

Meanwhile, on Iraqi diplomatic, who insisted on anonymity, said "we are disappointed with the communiqué" because "it repeats the same U.N. Security Council position."

Kuwait on Friday welcomed the summit statement. Abdul Aziz Al Dakhil, planning minister and minister of state for cabinet affairs, said in a statement that Kuwait welcomed the calls made by the three leaders.

## Protesters, troops clash

(Continued from page 1)

Troops pushed back the protesters, in some cases clubbing them. They arrested more than a dozen and imposed a curfew on Al Khader.

Dr. Tibi said troops provoked the demonstrators. "I am sorry to say maybe there were instructions to do so. Soldiers invaded 200 metres inside the demonstration and started to hit people, and this is the reason why the situation exploded," he told reporters.

"The army has behaved in a bad manner, by using force against the people who came to express their stand," said Israeli legislator Talab Al Sana, who was also jostled by troops as he stood linked arm-in-arm with Dr. Tibi.

Before the clashes, Mr. Arafat addressed the crowd by phone through a loudspeaker from his Gaza headquarters.

"My brothers, I appeal to you to continue on this stand in defence of this land for the sake of justice, for the sake of peace," he said.

Mr. Rabin trounced ex-Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud in a 1992 election after pledging to stop most government funding for Jewish settlements, which Palestinians view as a provocation.

The billtop has become a focal point for demonstrations against Jewish settlements in the West Bank, where more than 110,000 settlers live among 1.2 million Palestinians.

Palestinians are especially concerned Israel will form a ring of Jewish settlements around Jerusalem, the Arab half of which they see as the capital of a future state.

Palestinian Authority Secretary-General Tayeb Abdul Rahim told Reuters: "If Israel believes it can do whatever it wants without an Arab, an Islamic or an international reaction, it is dreaming."

The Palestinians are facing a "long and tough battle" over Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, Mr. Arafat warned Friday.

"I have just heard news that Israeli soldiers attacked the demonstration at El Khader village," he said in a speech at Al Azhar University.

"We are in a long, dangerous and tough battle. They (Israel) are trying to create new realities before the Palestinian authority moves to the West Bank," said Mr. Arafat.

"However they try to justify it, it is a clear violation of the peace agreement and we cannot accept it."

## COLUMN

### Tapie in trouble for hitting a policeman

POINTE-A-PITRE (AFP) — Embattled French politician and politician Bernard Tapie is in hot water again. This time for allegedly hitting a policeman, a reliable source on this French Caribbean island said. The policeman, a detective, alleges Mr. Tapie hit him while he was talking out Mr. Tapie's house in the French section of the island of Saint-Martin, and has been legal proceedings against Mr. Tapie. "Tapie probably thought he was a policeman," a source told AFP. Mr. Tapie, a Euro-MP, was declared bankrupt by a Paris court on Dec. 14, a decision which bars him from public office for five years and wrecks his dream of standing for election as mayor of Marseille. He is appealing the decision.

### 'I've won the lottery, but don't tell anyone'

LONDON (R) — Britain's latest lottery winner claimed his £7.8 million (\$12 million) jackpot, but insisted on remaining anonymous. Lottery organisers said. Four winners of smaller prizes of £340,000 (\$526,200) also told lottery organisers Camelot to keep their names secret. Bashfulness among winners of the new National Lottery, which began only six weeks ago, follows a media frenzy caused when the largest prize so far — £17.8 million (\$27.55 million) — was announced three weeks ago and the winner demanded anonymity. Newspaper reporters besieged the home of a 41-year-old Indian immigrant after pinpointing him as the lucky winner. The newspapers then fought a court battle with Camelot, which is obliged to respect requests for anonymity, over whether they could print his name. The newspapers won, but most decided to respect his demand not to be named. But the company, a profit-making consortium which gives a share of the lottery takings to charity, was accused by members of parliament of leading the media to the jackpot winner. Since then, all winners have demanded anonymity. Lotteries in other countries such as Spain and the United States, offer much higher payouts, but controversy rumbles on in Britain over the size of the top prizes. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, spiritual leader of millions of Anglicans worldwide, joined the fray, saying that the jackpots should be smaller.

### French algae to help Japanese slim down

BREST, France (AFP) — A Japanese importer has ordered 17,000 cans of algae infusions made by Brest-based firm Océalis, for sale at Tokyo beauty institutes and diet food shops, Océalis said Wednesday. "The importer asked me to create a line of seven algae-based infusions, each with its own characteristics," said cosmeticologist and Océalis manager Fabienne Breslin. She used seven food algae which she combined with extracts of fruits, spices and other plants. She said the seven "tissanes" have "calming" effects and help the takers slim down, promoting individual well-being. Breslin set up the company in June last year.

### Drinkmaker's ad too much for Coca-Cola to bear

BOSTON (R) — The goliath of soft drinks took on David when Coca-Cola Co. sued a 112-year-old family-owned soft drink business to stop it from running television ads featuring a polar bear. Coca-Cola, the Atlanta-based multinational giant, filed an injunction in U.S. district court against Polar Corp., a soft drink maker in Worcester, Massachusetts. Polar said it has used a polar bear named Orson as its mascot for most of its history and ran an animated ad with a polar bear 17 years ago. Coca-Cola, in turn, has run ads featuring early 1900s

## Scalfaro will try to avert snap polls

ROME (Agencies) — President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro indicated on Friday he was opposed to calling the snap general election being demanded by outgoing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

In his first public acknowledgement of the seriousness of the political drama facing Italy, Mr. Scalfaro said he would need to hold a fresh round of talks with politicians to find a solution to the crisis sparked by Mr. Berlusconi's resignation last week.

Mr. Scalfaro said the first round of consultations provided "a clear and evident result: That a majority (in parliament) say 'no' to immediate elections."

He told reporters it was his duty to first seek a solution that could avoid new elections less than a year after Italians went to the polls.

Mr. Scalfaro said he would have to hold a second round, which political sources said will start after the New Year holiday.

His comments put him at loggerheads with Mr. Berlusconi, who has insisted that snap elections are the only way to solve the crisis that broke after his former allies in the federalist Northern League left his stormy coalition.

This week's talks revealed deadlock between an alliance of the media tycoon and his loyal partners in the hard right National Alliance on one side and most other forces in parliament on the other.

Mr. Berlusconi's camp says that any government that does not include them, or involves the opposition, would betray electors who voted for the "freedom of choice" which won general elections last March.

Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia kept up its pressure on Scalfaro to appoint a tycoon as caretaker minister and said he spoke under the con-

stitution is the government must take the elections," said a spokesman.

He was mistaken